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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION: EFFECTING CHANGE

by

MARGARET T. McPHEE STEVENSON ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Edmonton, Alberta
Fall, 1995

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Date: June 29, 1995

DEDICATION

THIS STUDY IS DEDICATED

TO THE MEMORY OF

FRIEND AND MENTOR

JAMES NIMMO BRITTON

Emeritus Professor of Education
University of London
London, England

b. May 18, 1908 d. February 28, 1994

When Death Shall Take Me Unawares

When death shall take me unawares
Intent upon some earlier destination,
I'd have him know -- and all his retinue --
I was the one that planned it so:
That I might neither sit
And wait his coming
Nor be discountenanced when he comes.

James Britton, September, 1982

ABSTRACT

This historical, descriptive study examines the role of leadership in effecting change in children's language learning programs in a large school district (80,000 students) over eleven years. Leadership is examined in three contexts. First, the leadership of the language arts supervisor and consultants (the language arts team) is studied as they carry out their work across the district from kindergarten to grade twelve. Next, the leadership of Duffy, a principal, is examined as he establishes a new elementary school and administers it for three years. We follow Duffy for a further three years as an associate superintendent, a leader of approximately thirty principals.

The influence of the language arts supervisor and consultants on Duffy is examined in these two situations as it affects programs and policies on children's language learning. A method of inductive analysis is used to analyze data collected from interviews, documents, and other records.

This study comprises four papers; each paper is an individual entity, with its own bibliography. Common themes run through the four papers. The first paper, Effecting Change by Developing Ownership,

describes the strategies used by the language arts team to influence teachers, principals, central office administrators, and parents.

The second paper, Principal as Change Agent: Duffy Establishing and Administering a New School, focuses on Duffy in his role as educational and instructional leader, developing his school as a unit of change and encouraging his teachers to become their own experts.

In the third paper, Language and Learning: The Power of Influence, three aspects of language learning are examined in detail in two contexts, in order to establish relationships. The first context is that of Duffy's elementary school; the second is the broad context of the school district and the work of the language arts team.

And finally, the fourth paper, Duffy as Associate Superintendent: Providing Pressure and Support, describes a three-year project mandated by Duffy in the schools under his supervision. Each principal, along with the teachers, was required to develop and implement a school philosophy of the language learning of children.

Each paper contains its own conclusions. A description of each paper and a reflection on the themes common to the four papers comprise Chapter II.

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CHAPTER I

EDUCATIONAL CHANGE: HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE?

Introduction

This study is an attempt to answer a question I asked myself as I prepared to retire from a large school district in 1988. The last ten years of my career had been spent as Supervisor, Language Arts, K-12, working with a team of six consultants, providing leadership, advice, and assistance to teachers, principals, and central office administrators. My responsibilities ranged from kindergarten to grade twelve; the consultants generally worked with either elementary or secondary language arts teachers and programs. All of us met with parent groups and teacher support groups, offered workshops and inservice sessions, worked intensively in individual schools, and made presentations at conferences. Our work was varied and extensive, but focused. Our philosophical position on the language learning of children was consistent across the group; our work reflected our background and training as individuals.

I believed that, over the years, we had influenced teachers and principals, and through them, language learning programs for children. The question I asked myself, though, was, "How do you know you have made a difference?"

The Study

In order to find an answer to my question, I developed a study that is both historical and descriptive. I determined that I would first review and analyze the records of the work done by our language arts team during the ten years I was supervisor (1978 - 1988). This would provide an overview of the leadership we had provided as well as some categories for assessing our assistance.

What I needed now was a means of obtaining more specific information; therefore, the next step was to focus on the leadership of one person, whom I call Duffy for purposes of this study. In two different settings, Duffy had emphasized the language learning of children -- first, as a principal, then as an associate superintendent. He had also stated that our work had influenced his thinking. It seemed possible that I could trace our influence through this one person and thus find an answer to my question. At the same time, I could examine Duffy's leadership in the two settings.

In the first setting, Duffy was principal of a new elementary school that I call Wild Rose School. Before opening the school in 1983, Duffy had determined that it would be organized to facilitate children's learning. Duffy selected his teachers according to their beliefs about children's learning and their ability to adapt to his organizational plan. When Duffy left the principalship in 1986, Wild Rose School was recognized locally, nationally, and internationally for its language learning program.

Duffy became an associate superintendent of schools in 1986, after he left Wild Rose School. In this new setting, where he supervised about thirty schools each year, language became a priority of all schools. Duffy initiated a three-year project that required each school to develop and implement a philosophy of children's language learning. The project was completed in 1989.

Duffy agreed to be the key informant in my study. Two of Duffy's teachers at Wild Rose School, three consultants, a colleague of Duffy's, the principal who replaced Duffy at Wild Rose School, and twenty-two principals from Duffy's area also agreed to provide information. The information that I analyzed comprised documents, other print material, and interviews.

The purpose of the study is to examine leadership and its effect on educational change, specifically in the area of the language learning of children.

Collecting the Data

Since this study is historical, it was necessary to search through documents going back many years, looking for evidence of what happened, for what purpose, and who was involved. It also meant interviewing many people to obtain their recollections of the events and the meaning of the events to them.

The documents included records of activities of the language arts team from 1978 to 1988 -- notices of workshops, inservice sessions and mini-conferences, lists of registrants, evaluations of the sessions, and schedules of the school visits and sessions provided by our external consultants for teachers, administrators, parents, and trustees. The records also included our publications -- research reports, position papers, pamphlets, booklets, brochures, newsletters, and annotated lists of professional materials.

After Duffy agreed to be the key informant for my study, he provided position papers and articles he had written as well as six large binders. Three binders, dated 1983 to 1986, held all the monthly community newsletters and all the weekly newsletters Duffy wrote to his teachers, school handbooks, philosophy statement, language arts booklet, assessment and reporting procedures, and all the inservice notices and other pieces of information that a principal passes along to teachers. The material in the binders comprised a record of three years in the lives of a principal and the teachers in one school. Three other binders, dated 1986 to 1989, contained all the notices and information Duffy sent out to his principals during the years he was an associate superintendent, responsible for about thirty schools each year.

Information from interviews was used to corroborate, explain, and add details to written information. Duffy provided ten one-hour interviews. Rachel was interviewed three times, while other informants were interviewed once; they also provided print information.

Twenty-two principals from Duffy's project as an associate superintendent agreed to be interviewed. This group of principals comprised all seven who remained in the same schools in Duffy's area for the full three years of the project, all ten who had completed two years of the project, and five principals randomly selected from the group who had completed one year in Duffy's project. There were between forty and forty-five principals involved in the project for varying lengths of time over the three years.

Interviewing

According to Patton (1987), "The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter the other person's perspective" (p. 109). After receiving permission from those involved, I conducted audiotaped interviews in order to enter into the perspective of several individuals who provided information for my study. Eight one-hour taped interviews were conducted with Duffy, the key informant, in his office, from October, 1988 to June, 1990. The purpose of the interviews was to provide information about Duffy's three years as a principal at Wild Rose School (1983 - 1986) and his three-year project as associate superintendent (1986 - 1989). A ninth interview was conducted in April, 1992, to collect biographical information, and a tenth and final interview in March, 1995.

Before the first interview, I forwarded some questions Duffy might address, starting with his preparations for opening Wild Rose School. At his first interview, Duffy provided several papers and documents he had prepared both before and after opening the school. These papers, along with the interview guide, helped structure the first audiotaped interview. I then transcribed the tape and forwarded a copy to Duffy, along with a guide for the next interview. Thereafter, each interview started with a review of the previous one; points were clarified and questions of intent were raised. Duffy provided information, explanations, and reflections; he expressed opinions and feelings.

I conducted three audiotaped interviews with Rachel -- one of Duffy's teachers, and also conducted single audiotaped interviews with Libby -- another of Duffy's teachers, three consultants, another principal who was a colleague of Duffy's, and the principal who replaced Duffy at Wild Rose School. In each case, an appointment was made by telephone, followed by written confirmation and an interview guide. A similar procedure was used to interview the twenty-two principals. Identical interview guides were sent to the principals, who were interviewed in their school offices. During all interviews, I took notes to capture nonverbal information, such as gestures and facial expressions, as well as comments made during discussions after taping. Within a few hours of each interview, I wrote my reflections on what had been said and not said, and any questions that came to mind. Only the tapes from Duffy's interviews were transcribed.

To ensure confidentiality, all persons whose interviews were audiotaped were assured that their tapes would be erased after the study was completed. Duffy was also assured that my copy of the transcripts of his taped interviews would be destroyed. (Duffy and I had the only copies.) The principals were assured that only general statements pertaining to their comments would be made; there would be no direct quotations of principals' comments. This gave further assurance of confidentiality.

Interpreting the Data

The four papers that comprise this study are independent entities, but all are related. All use some of the data described in Collecting the Data, with some overlap. Although the data used for the individual papers were analyzed separately, some of the themes that emerged were then developed further in another paper.

A process of inductive analysis was used throughout to provide organization to the extensive print information and taped interviews. As Patton (1987) explains, "Inductive analysis means that patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being decided prior to data collection and analysis" (p. 150).

The starting point for my analysis was the transcript of Duffy's interviews. As I prepared for each interview, I studied the transcript of the previous one. As I analyzed the transcripts, several themes emerged. For example, there were many indications that Duffy worked from a philosophy of children's learning, and that he expected consistency between philosophy and practice when he was principal of Wild Rose School and later at the schools under his supervision. Further, Duffy revealed himself as a risk-taker. I also learned that he believed in controlling the processes as he worked toward his goals. Using these themes as a basic organizer, I was able to deal with the 1500 pages of newsletters, documents, and information.

Guba (1978) suggests that "in focusing the analysis of qualitative data an evaluator must deal first with the problem of 'convergence'" (cited in Patton, 1987, p. 153). My next step, then, could be described as deciding what things fit together. I refined and developed the themes by adding details from the newsletters; I added quotes from the transcripts of Duffy's and others' interviews. I also included support for my interpretations from research and literature. To follow through with one theme, I explained how Duffy controlled the process of staff development at Wild Rose School to the extent that his teachers became their own experts, in charge of their own professional development.

A similar process was used in analyzing the data from Duffy's three-year project as an associate superintendent. Initially, I analyzed the transcripts of Duffy's interviews; as the themes emerged, I added information and quotes from the documents he provided. Following that, I analyzed the principals' views, which were supported by general comments synthesized from their taped interviews. The principals' comments added another dimension, which it was my responsibility to interpret and explain.

I also used inductive analysis to organize the data for the paper, Effecting Change by Developing Ownership, which describes the work I did along with a team of consultants across the district for ten years. In this case, the themes arose from my own lived experience as language arts supervisor during that time. These themes were then developed and supported by evidence from our records and from formal and informal interviews with several of the consultants who had been involved.

Time is a factor and an organizer throughout the study. I examined two consecutive three-year periods in Duffy's career (1983 - 1986, 1986 - 1989). Before and during this time, I was working at the district level as language arts supervisor, along with six consultants (1978 - 1988). There was time before Duffy's appointment as principal for us to influence him and the teachers he eventually hired through the workshops and inservice sessions we provided. The overlap of time is important to the study, as well as the time that doesn't overlap.

The language learning of children is a preselected theme that provides a common content and basis for examination and comparison.

Our team focused specifically on children's language learning across all programs and all subjects; language also became an important part of Duffy's focus, both as a school principal and as an associate superintendent.

Validity

In an effort to increase validity of the findings, I used a variety of techniques. I analyzed taped interviews and over 1500 pages of documents. Information obtained from the interviews was validated by checking documents previously written by the persons interviewed. In many cases the interviews took place six or seven years after the print material was prepared; therefore, it was important to check the consistency of the data over time. Several points of view were solicited through interviews to address each question in the study. Usually this provided confirming information; occasionally there were inconsistencies. Principals and teachers can bring different points of view to a situation, as can principals and their superintendent. The differences were addressed, as well as the similarities.

Draft copies of the chapters were provided to Duffy, the key informant, and, where applicable, to teachers or principals who had been interviewed. This allowed for a process called "consensual validation" (Eisner, 1991, p. 112). This constitutes an agreement among those competent to know on the description and interpretation of the data and its organization into themes.

The above procedures, which contributed to establishing validity, are discussed in the following literature.

Eisner (1991) stresses the importance of validity "when it comes to matters as complex and subtle as the description, interpretation, and evaluation of teaching and life in classrooms" (p. 109). He continues by describing "structural corroboration" as a means through which we seek "a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility" (p. 110). We can use multiple types of data, such as interviews, analysis of materials, and observations. Using structural corroboration, "we look for recurrent behaviours or actions, those theme-like features of a situation that inspire confidence that the events interpreted and appraised are not aberrant or exceptional" (p. 110).

Mathison (1988) describes a similar process of establishing validity, called "data triangulation." This involves using multiple types of data; it also includes using more than one individual as a source of data and considers time and space, that is, collecting data on the same individuals at different times and in different settings. Mathison also makes the point that, by using triangulation, the differences will not necessarily cancel out to allow all the information to converge on a single proposition. There can be inconsistent information; occasionally there is even contradictory information. It is the responsibility of the researcher to provide explanations for the data (pp. 14, 15).

Patton (1987) provides further explanation of methods that were important to my study. He comments:

> . . . it means checking the consistency of what people say over time; and it means comparing the perspectives of people with different points of view. It means validating information obtained through interviews by checking

> program documents and other written evidence that can corroborate what interview respondents report. (p. 161)

There are four separate but related parts to my study, each reported in a separate paper (Chapters III, IV, V, and VI). Techniques used to increase validity varied across the papers, and are explained below.

The first paper, Effecting Change by Developing Ownership, is a description, summary, and interpretation of work done by our language arts team from 1978 to 1988. As Supervisor, Language Arts, working with a team of consultants in a large school district, I was the only constant over the ten years; the consultants made career changes after five to seven years. Information was gathered by examining documents reporting our activities as well as print material we developed for use across the district. Informal and taped interviews with consultants were used to confirm/disconfirm my interpretation of events. Finally, the draft paper was read by two persons -- a university professor who worked for a year with our team, and a retired principal. The professor had an understanding of the overall purpose of our work, while the principal and his teachers were among those affected by what we did.

The second paper, Principal as Change Agent: Duffy Establishing and Administering a New School, tells the story of a principal's leadership in establishing a school as a unit of change. A series of interviews with Duffy, the principal, were taped and transcribed; they were then interpreted, along with over 1000 pages of documents from the school, to obtain a picture of Duffy's leadership over the three years. Since the interviews took place from three to six years after the documents were written, it was important to check for consistency of the data over time. Information from taped interviews with two of Duffy's teachers added another point of view. During the process of interpreting the data, informal interviews were held with one of the teachers and with Duffy to check inconsistencies. The draft paper was read by Duffy and both teachers to validate the events and my interpretation.

In the third paper, Language and Learning: The Power of Influence, three specific questions were addressed and related to both Duffy's school and work the language arts consultants and I did at the district level. School documents from the three years Duffy was principal and district documents going back ten years were analyzed and interpreted in an attempt to show relationships. Detailed descriptions, examples, and quotations from the documents were used to support my interpretation. The taped interviews of Duffy and the two teachers were again used as sources of information and confirmation, along with informal and taped interviews with former consultants. Draft copies of this paper were provided to Duffy, the two teachers, a former consultant, and a retired principal. Inconsistencies were noted and points clarified. Meanings were negotiated. All this was done to increase the validity of my interpretation.

The fourth paper, Duffy as Associate Superintendent: Providing Pressure and Support, describes a three-year project that Duffy, now an associate superintendent, undertook with the principals who were responsible to him. In order to interpret the meaning of the project and the events surrounding it, I drew on several pieces of information that could be related and interrelated. Taped interviews with Duffy regarding those three years were transcribed; documents provided by Duffy were analyzed. Information from both was compared to ensure consistency and to increase validity. Notes were made from taped interviews with twenty-two principals; documents provided by the principals were examined. Again, information from tapes and documents was compared to ensure consistency and increase validity. This provided a credible base of information regarding the two points of view on the project -- Duffy's and the principals'. This information was interpreted and presented in the paper. The draft paper was read by Duffy and two of the seven principals who had been involved in the project for the full three years. Meanings were negotiated, differences were discussed, and adjustments made to increase the validity of my interpretation.

Responsibility of the Researcher

As a researcher, I was investigating, describing, and interpreting the world in which I had lived. I knew all the people I interviewed -- the consultants, Duffy, the teachers at Wild Rose School when he was principal there, Duffy's colleagues, the principal who replaced Duffy at Wild Rose School, and the principals who were responsible to him when he was an associate superintendent. I had worked with some of them over a long period of time; others, I knew only slightly. I had an insider's understanding of the extensive work done at the district level in children's language learning since, along with the consultants, I had set the direction, organized, and implemented the activities. Much time had also been spent conducting program reviews in schools at all levels.

During the course of the reviews of language programs, I would spend at least two weeks in one school, immersed in the culture and activities, observing students and teachers. Over the years, I had also spent periods of time in individual schools at the invitation of the principals and teachers, working with them intensively on a particular aspect of their programs.

I brought a unique perspective to this study due to my extensive background in the area I was researching and also due to my experience in the school district. Eisner calls this the point of view of the "educational connoisseur" (1985, 1991). Certainly, no one could have told the same story that I told, because I was part of the story. As Eisner comments, "In qualitative work the researcher's background can influence the way in which the situation is described, interpreted, and appraised; hence knowing who the researcher is and where he or she has come from is not altogether irrelevant" (1991, p. 193).

My background and experience had certain advantages for me and for the people I interviewed; it also brought responsibilities. Those I interviewed, especially the principals, often wanted to spend extra time after the interview. They talked about their work in the school, asked for my advice, and took me to visit classrooms and school libraries. We discussed professional reading for teachers and parents; they asked me to recommend books they could order for the professional section of their school libraries. I was pleased to be able to spend the time with them, and happy to see children and teachers at work. For my part, I had always worked at a level of trust with the principals. In this situation, I trusted the principals to provide me with the information I needed for my study; they trusted that I would be judicious and circumspect in my use of the information. I also provided the safeguards previously described. As well, there was the factor that, because of my background, they knew that I already knew a great deal about my study; they were aware that they weren't dealing with the usual Ph.D. student embarking on a study.

My unique position also brought with it the responsibility to confirm the data from a variety of sources. Information from interviews was checked carefully with information from print sources and with interviews with other informants. Information from the same informant was checked over time. Information from as many sources as possible was brought to bear on each question; often it was confirming information, but not necessarily. I made every attempt to be scrupulously fair in dealing with the information from each informant, using methods I describe under Validity, checking and rechecking sources and interpretations.

My responsibility as a researcher was to "be fair and conscientious in taking account of multiple perspectives, multiple interests, and multiple possibilities" (Patton, 1987, p. 167), in order to produce useful and valid data.

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CHAPTER II

COMMENTARY: REFLECTIONS ON EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Introduction

In this chapter, I describe the four papers that are found in Chapters III, IV, V, and VI, and that form the body of this thesis. I then explain the links that tie the four papers together and the themes, the threads, that are woven throughout the papers. Each paper is complete in itself, with its own bibliography; each paper tells one part of the story of attempts made to effect change in students' language learning in a large school district. The main characters remain the same throughout, although the emphasis varies from one paper to the next. I am a constant throughout the story in my role as Supervisor, Language Arts, K-12, working with a group of six consultants who usually stayed from five to seven years, then made career changes. Duffy, a young principal when we meet him, is mentioned briefly in the first paper, then becomes the focus of two of the remaining papers and plays a large part in the other.

The consultants and I had responsibilities across the district, providing leadership, advice, and assistance to teachers from kindergarten to grade twelve, to principals, central office administrators, and parents. We promoted the development of a philosophical position on the language learning of children; we helped teachers and principals develop programs that reflected their position on the role of language in learning across all subjects. Duffy's role as leader and change agent is examined in two contexts -- first, as a leader of teachers when he opened a new elementary school and remained as principal for three years, then as a leader of principals when he was appointed an associate superintendent and assumed responsibility for thirty schools. Although Duffy was concerned with more than students' language learning, he focused on the role of language in their learning in both situations; therefore, for the purpose of this study, I discuss Duffy's leadership specifically in this area. The events in this story take place across eleven years, from 1978 to 1989.

The first paper, found in Chapter III, is entitled Effecting Change by Developing Ownership. In defining "ownership," Barth (1990) maintains that in a school that espouses learning and professionalism, the principal and teachers will take the lead in designing their own professional development. They will take ownership of their learning. This paper describes the work done by our language arts team over ten years with teachers, school and central office administrators, and parents. We had no power to require principals and teachers to make any changes; our influence had to come from our reputations, from our credibility, and from their understanding that our beliefs were based on sound theory and able to be translated into practice at the classroom level. The approach we took was to support teachers' activities and their networks; we also provided workshops, inservice sessions, in-school assistance, print and nonprint materials. We brought external consultants with worldwide reputations into the district. These experts supported our work and provided ideas, encouragement, and support for the teachers, principals, parents, trustees, and others. Our aim was to have teachers and principals ensure that the programs in their schools reflected their well-considered positions on the role of language in learning across all subjects. We wanted them to take ownership of their school programs, not just change them according to a trustee's request or an article they happened to read. Teachers and principals should be able to explain their positions and their programs to parents, trustees, or other interested persons, and be in charge of their own professional development.

It happened that some of the educators who attended our sessions and who took ownership of our ideas and their own programs were Duffy, who was appointed to open a new elementary school in 1983, and the teachers he selected to help him. For purposes of this study, the school is called Wild Rose School. The story of Duffy and his teachers is told in the second paper, which is found in Chapter IV and entitled Principal as Change Agent: Duffy Establishing and Administering a New School. Our influence on the staff and programs at Wild Rose School continued through the work of one of the language arts consultants who left our team to teach in Duffy's new school, and through other teachers on staff. This paper focuses on Duffy's role as educational and instructional leader as he developed his school as a unit of change and encouraged his teachers to become their own experts. Duffy viewed language and thought as working together to help form concepts the students could use in all their learning. This emphasis on the role of language in learning resulted in Wild Rose School being recognized internationally by the National Council of Teachers of English as a Centre of Excellence in Language Arts.

The third paper, found in Chapter V, is entitled Language and Learning: The Power of Influence. In this paper, I examine in detail three aspects of language learning according to their development at the school level, specifically, Wild Rose School, and at the district level through the work done by our language arts team. The three aspects of language learning that I address are the development of a philosophical position on children's language learning, the role language plays in students' learning in all subjects, often called "language across the curriculum," and the writing program. These aspects are related. "Language across the curriculum" stems from a school staff's beliefs about the role of language in learning; writing, one of the skills of language, provides a vehicle for teachers and principals to put their beliefs into practice. This analysis constitutes an attempt to "tease out" the influence we who were working at the district level had on the beliefs and program at one school.

The fourth paper, Chapter VI of the thesis and entitled Duffy as Associate Superintendent: Providing Pressure and Support, describes a project that continued through three of the four years Duffy was a leader of thirty principals. Duffy continued his emphasis on children's learning -- especially their language learning. First, he required each principal, along with staff, to develop a school philosophical position on children's language learning. In the second year, they were to develop a school plan to implement their beliefs; in the third year, they were to demonstrate to Duffy's satisfaction that they were implementing their plan, that is, that school programs reflected their philosophical position.

Throughout the three years of the project, Duffy's priority was the professional development of the principals, which was designed to provide both theory and practice. Our language arts team was involved in planning and providing inservice sessions for the principals as well as providing assistance at individual schools.

Throughout the four papers, I examine change in three contexts. First, our language arts team worked for ten years across the district to promote change in children's language programs. We believe that we had some influence on teachers, principals, central office administrators, and parents over that time. Second, in a three-year span, by working closely with teachers and parents, Duffy was instrumental in developing an elementary school into its own unit of change. The teachers developed such a sense of ownership of the philosophy and school programs that everything continued, unchanged, under the next principal. Finally, I discuss Duffy's leadership and the reactions of his principals and teachers when he mandated change in thirty schools. In a final interview, Duffy reflects on his years as an educational leader from his latest position, that of a high school principal.

Following is a discussion of four themes that emerged from the papers. They are: The Need for Writing One's Philosophy, The Importance of Consistency, Leadership and Change, and The Power of Language.

The Need for Writing One's Philosophy

In a 1988 article entitled "The Need for Writing One's Philosophy: A Commentary," McCauley, Criminology Department, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, makes a strong case for writing your philosophy, "whether we are discussing police administration, the practice of medicine, or higher education" (p. 2). He continues by arguing that "both individuals and organizations must reduce to writing their respective philosophies for the purpose of understanding one another's fundamental premises" (p. 2). Once you have committed your philosophy to writing, it is also possible for others to observe you to see if you practice what you preach (p. 5). This is confirmed by Schön (1983), who writes for professionals in all fields. In his writing Schön emphasizes the need for articulated, conscious theory.

Before he opened his new school in 1983, Duffy wrote his personal philosophy of children's learning. On the basis of his beliefs, he first decided on the organization of the children into classes and then selected his teachers. Three months into their first year in Wild Rose School, Duffy, his teachers, and the school secretary wrote the school's philosophy of children's learning. Thereafter, all decisions made about the children and their learning, inside and outside the classroom, were made according to their agreed-upon set of beliefs.

Three years later, as an associate superintendent, Duffy required that his thirty principals and their teachers develop philosophies of their students' language learning. This was a very difficult assignment for them, just as it was for McCauley's graduate and undergraduate students when required to write their philosophies of education. McCauley comments, "They hate the assignment. It is the most complex assignment confronting many of them. It is hard work. But it is necessary work" (1988, p. 3). Two of Duffy's principals who did not complete the assignment commented that their staffs needed to develop a philosophy of children's learning before they addressed one on children's language learning. These principals recognized that a philosophical position on children's learning was the basis for other positions taken by the school staffs, including language learning.

What happens when a school does not have a statement of beliefs about literacy? Meek, recently retired Senior Lecturer, University of London Institute of Education, author of books and articles on literacy and children's literature, states, "Every school has a view of literacy, not always explicit" (1983, p. 16).

Meek (1983) continues:

> In facing outward toward the community, the school announces its view of literacy, at least partly, by the allocation of place, time, people and resources to bring it about. The school library, the provision and care of books, for example, tell a great deal about the school's view of reading. An awareness amongst the staff as a whole of the linguistic implications of the presence of second language learners in the school, the discussion of a language policy with regard to the total curriculum, reflect publicly the nature, extent and mode of these concerns. (p. 17)

Duffy, working at a school and then at an area level, and our language arts team, working across the district, all believed in the importance of making our views about literacy explicit. (The philosophy of the language arts team was printed in a document entitled *A Language Working Paper*.) An implicit position announced to the parents and community only by school priorities and activities could be ambiguous, and might not provide the opportunity for open discussion and explanation. A theory, in writing, allows school staffs to deliberately build upon their stated beliefs, that is, to relate practice to theory.

The Importance of Consistency

Random House Webster's College Dictionary defines consistency as "agreement, harmony, or compatibility, especially correspondence or uniformity among the parts of a complex thing." It is this agreement or harmony that is referred to when the word "consistency" is used throughout the four papers. One of the consultants with our language arts team commented that there was consistency of philosophy among the consultants, but enough differences that each felt that he or she made a unique contribution. To explain further, we all held the same position on children's learning and on the role of language in their learning. However, some consultants had specialized in secondary English, one had extensive drama training, and another a degree in theology. Some had training and experience as reading specialists, another in early childhood education and children's literature. Our consistency kept us moving in the same direction; our differences led us to constantly challenge each other, to keep us thinking and growing.

Duffy had a similar experience when he opened Wild Rose School. He selected teachers who held the same philosophical position on children's learning that he did. Since they all came with different training and teaching experiences, Duffy did not expect his teachers to use the same processes in implementing their common philosophy. Their differences allowed them to keep discussing, challenging each other, and growing. Duffy and his staff developed and wrote their school position on children's learning early in the first year. Thereafter, they related it to every program, subject, and activity. In doing this, they developed another kind of consistency; they were able to develop assessment and reporting procedures with no difficulty. All that Duffy and his staff undertook reflected harmony or agreement of the parts to one another and to the whole.

Duffy was aware that this consistency contributed to the success of Wild Rose School; therefore, it became an important part of his work with principals when he was appointed associate superintendent. After advising his principals that they must develop their positions on children's language learning, Duffy stated:

> I'm not trying to tell you what your philosophy should be. All I'm telling you is that I want some consistency between that philosophy and the practice in your schools. (Interview, January, 1989)

Consistency was a feature of Duffy's work in two settings, and of the work of the language arts team across the district. It appears time and again as an important thread woven throughout the four papers.

Leadership and Change

Duffy, who described himself as an educational and instructional leader, was involved in effecting change, both as a principal and as a leader of principals. The language arts consultants and I, working across a large school district, were also trying to effect change. There were some similarities in the approaches we took; as I mentioned, we all believed in starting with a philosophy of children's learning. Maehr, Midgley, & Urdan confirm the importance of starting with a position on learning. They state, "It [change] ought to relate to a view about the nature of students and learning . . . ." (1992, p. 425). Our theoretical position was the result of years of experience working with students, and of reflecting on that experience. As van Manen (1990) explains:

> . . . human science does not see theory as something that stands *before* practice in order to 'inform' it. Rather theory enlightens practice. Practice (or life) always comes first and theory comes later as a result of reflection. (p. 15)

We who work with teachers and principals need to bear in mind the importance of providing workshops and practical experiences first and not, in our enthusiasm, starting with our own beliefs. Nor should we expect teachers and principals to state their beliefs about children's learning without providing opportunities for them first to reflect on their practice.

Our leadership styles varied, due to the differences in our positions. The consultants and I were in "staff" positions; we could not require attendance at our sessions, let alone that the participants apply what they had learned. We worked from a position of influence, which is defined by *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* as "the capacity or power of persons or things to produce effects on others by intangible or indirect means." At Wild Rose School, Duffy's teachers were responsible to him, as were his thirty principals when Duffy became an associate superintendent. Duffy had selected his teachers and worked closely with them on a daily basis, back and forth between theory and practice, in an environment over which he had a great deal of control. In the less-controlled environment of an area consisting of thirty schools scattered across a large school district, Duffy used the power of his position to make specific requirements of his principals, at the same time focusing on their professional development.

Educational change takes time. According to Fullan, changes "take up to 10 years in a given jurisdiction -- 10 years of doing the right things consistently and persistently" (1991, p. 210). Fullan also points out that change is not necessarily progress -- a principal or superintendent could spend ten years doing the wrong things, consistently and persistently. It took ten years for the language arts team to effect the changes noted in Chapters III, IV, and V. I should point out, also, that we were working with teachers and principals who had indicated they were interested in change. By establishing a new school on a philosophy of children's learning, selecting his own teachers, applying the philosophy "consistently and persistently," and controlling the school environment, Duffy could institutionalize a program in three years.

However, in his role as associate superintendent, Duffy's three-year project aimed at effecting change in the thirty schools in his area was only partially successful; one reason is that there were only seven of the original principals remaining in his area at the end of three years. Fullan describes changeover of personnel as "the unseen hand of destruction of enthusiastic or heavily promoted change efforts over time" (1991, p. 200). In this case, Duffy was unable to control the environment. He also used a different approach by mandating the change, and, as Fullan notes, "Mandates make people resist change"

(1991, p. 211). As someone who was directly involved in the project, it is my impression that, while there are definite advantages to the approach that Duffy took, the disadvantages of mandating the priority may very well outweigh the advantages.

Those who promote educational change need a vision and a sense of mission. Duffy also brought another characteristic to the task -- he was a risk-taker. He demonstrated this by refusing to organize Wild Rose School according to the traditional graded system, and by selecting his teachers according to their philosophical positions on children's learning and the way they worked with children rather than according to their training and expertise. As an associate superintendent, Duffy again demonstrated that he was a risk-taker by selecting an area of the curriculum as his focus, something none of his colleagues had tried. When Duffy defined his role as "educational and instructional leader," there was a certain amount of risk involved. He was working in a district where the main focus was on management; an associate superintendent who wanted to be "in the loop" would probably not focus on children's learning.

The Power of Language

Language is one thread that is important to all four papers -- the language development of children and young people, the role of language in all their learning, and the relationship between language and thought. All papers deal with the importance of working from a philosophical position, a point of view about children's language learning, whether one is a teacher, principal, supervisor, consultant, associate superintendent, or parent.

Recently there has been increased interest in the language that principals use. Sergiovanni (1992) discusses the power of language to shape reality. He compares the language of the principals when schools are viewed as instructional delivery systems with the language used when schools are viewed as communities (p. 309). Beck & Murphy (1992) studied "the ways in which language has both reflected and influenced the thought and practice of administrators" (p. 391).

Duffy viewed Wild Rose School as a community of learners. When he wrote his weekly newsletter to staff, the intended audience was known to him; he had selected the teaching and nonteaching staff and worked closely with them every day. The language Duffy used reflected the closeness and caring of a group of people engaged in a common enterprise. It was language that Britton called "expressive" (1992, pp. 164-180) when he sought words to describe children's writing. This personal language, which is close to speech written down, is also used by adults, depending on the audience and purpose for the writing. It is the language used when addressing family or close friends. For Duffy, it was first-draft writing, an informal means of communicating with his teachers. He talked about good things he had observed in their classrooms, which were always related to the kind of experiences teachers were providing for children. When things were not quite right, such as supervision of children on the playground, Duffy discussed that, as well. Sometimes he mentioned what he was reading or provided an anecdote about his family. The feeling of closeness and caring was evident in Duffy's writing. There are many examples of expressive writing from Duffy's newsletters to his teachers found in Chapter IV, Principal as Change Agent: Duffy Establishing and Administering a New School.

After Duffy was appointed associate superintendent of thirty schools spread throughout the district, the closeness was missing and the sense of being a community of learners difficult to achieve. Duffy had not selected these principals; some of them he had never met before. He did not see them and work with them every day, as he had with his teachers at Wild Rose School. Every year there were many changes of principals. Whereas the teachers would be described as a "known" audience for Duffy's writing, the principals would be closer to an "unknown" audience. Duffy responded to these changes by changing his writing; he used what Britton refers to as "transactional" writing, which is intended to fit with the ongoing activities of the participants and to give them precise directions and instructions. The writing has to stand on its own due to the distance between writer and audience. Because it is intended for a wide, often unknown audience, the language is formal, specific, and can be controlling. Transactional language and transactional writing are used to get the work of the world done, according to specifications, and on time (Britton, 1992, pp. 174-179). Duffy's messages to his principals, found in Chapter VI, Duffy As Associate Superintendent: Providing Pressure and Support, provide examples of transactional writing.

Although language is the focus of the four papers, it provides only one means of responding to and representing experience. Children and adults can and do respond through dance, movement, song, or by playing a musical instrument. They can compose a piece of music, paint a picture, or cook a gourmet dish (Eisner, 1982, pp. 34-43). This may be what Britton (1992) had in mind when he ended his new edition of *Language and Learning* with this sentence:

> We cannot afford to underestimate the value of language as a means of organizing and consolidating our accumulated experience, or its value as a means of interacting with people and objects to create experience; nor can we, on the other hand, afford to ignore the limits of its role in the total pattern of human behaviour. (p. 320)

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CHAPTER III

EFFECTING CHANGE BY DEVELOPING OWNERSHIP

> *You only know the fish are alive when you see them swimming upstream.*
>
> Eisner, 1990

Introduction

This is a story that covers the last ten years of my career, from 1978 to 1988, during which time I was Supervisor, Language Arts, K-12, in a school district with 80,000 students and over 4,000 teachers and administrators. Over those ten years I worked with several consultants whom I was able to select on the basis of their beliefs about the nature of language and the role of language in learning, their experience as teachers, and their leadership qualities. Together, we became a team. Our role was to provide leadership, advice, and assistance on the language learning of students and all related programs to teachers, administrators, parents, and other interested persons.

It was important that we maintain a close working relationship with those having similar interests and responsibilities at the local university, at the provincial Department of Education, and with colleagues in neighbouring school districts. We also established and maintained a network of friends and colleagues across Canada, the

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A version of this chapter has been published. Stevenson, M. (1995). The power of influence: Effecting change by developing ownership. In C. Dudley - Marling & D. Searle (Eds.), *Who owns learning? Questions of autonomy, choice, and control.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

United States, and England. All our professional colleagues contributed to our efforts to influence the teachers, administrators, and parents in our school district.

I use the term "influence" deliberately because curriculum supervisors and consultants have no power to require teachers or administrators to make any changes. Our influence had to come from their understanding that our beliefs were based on sound theory, were well-articulated, and able to be translated into practice at the classroom level.

The view of language that we espoused could be called holistic. This applied whether language was being expressed through writing and speaking, or received by reading and listening. It also applied whether English was being learned as a native or other language, and to languages other than English.

The term *holistic* implies that language is considered in "chunks" large enough to convey meaning. In fact, meaning is central to the holistic approach, which is also known as "real books (in Britain), and occasionally literature-based learning, language experience, or emergent literacy" (Smith, 1992, p. 440). An holistic approach assumes that the skills of language (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) support each other and apply across all subjects.

The basis of this philosophy is respect --

> . . . respect for language (which should be natural and "authentic," not contrived and fragmented) and respect for learners (who should be engaged in meaningful and productive activities, not in pointless drills and rote

> memorization). The philosophy has attracted the enthusiastic support of scores of thousands of teachers. It is without doubt the most vital movement in education today, and its political and social influence has been enormous. (Willinski, 1990, cited in Smith, 1992, p. 440)

In this paper I explain how I worked with a team of consultants in a position of influence. Our aim was to effect change by helping teachers and administrators develop a philosophical position on the nature of language and the role of language in learning, and by helping them ensure that their beliefs were reflected in classroom practice. The strategies that we used are described and related to research on educational change.

The Change Process

James Britton, a recognized authority on children's language and a frequent visitor to our school district, often reminded us that change is contagious; teachers catch it from each other. Fullan calls this phenomenon "shared meaning," and describes it as "a group of teachers using the innovation with some degree of consistency" (1991/1992, p. 8).

That significant teacher change is a very slow, deep process, and that teachers learn best from each other, is reinforced time and again in the literature and research on teacher change (Fullan, 1982, 1991; Lambert, 1988; Stephens, 1987). Teachers emulate one another, either on an informal or formal basis, adopting and/or adapting the practices of peers they judge to be successful and effective. Reflection, time, and support are needed. Many complex and interrelated ideas must first come together in the minds of teachers before the change can become part of the program for the students.

It is also important to note that those who introduce change (policy makers, university professors, administrators) often treat teachers in exactly the same way as they criticize teachers for treating the students. New curricula emphasize the importance of being sensitive to where students are, what they think and why; yet the same curricula are introduced to teachers in ways that ignore what they think and why. Teachers undergoing the change process need to be helped to see it as a learning process and themselves as adult learners.

Change always carries a certain amount of ambiguity and uncertainty; teachers often have the feeling that they are confronting more information than they can handle. This is the case whether others impose the change, whether teachers volunteer to participate, or whether they initiate the change. In each case the meaning of change is often not clear at the outset; uncertainty and discouragement are bound to accompany the change.

The change that we were advocating meant influencing teachers' philosophical beliefs and helping them see the relationship between their beliefs and their classroom practices. Teachers needed to become acquainted with the practical aspects of change in the classroom and to relate that to their beliefs, that is, their philosophical position. It was important for them to discuss their beliefs and classroom activities with one another. This is a far more difficult approach to change than asking teachers to use new materials or to try a different strategy (Fullan, 1982).

Doyle & Ponder (1977 - 1978), in their discussion of the theory/

practice issue, maintain that focusing first on statements of theory and philosophy is not a practical approach because teachers lack the necessary procedural references. They claim that teachers need an understanding of the operational meaning of the expected change that they can refer to their theoretical position. Teachers generally do not develop the theory first and then consider the implications for the classroom. This is an important consideration for those who provide for both the preservice and inservice education of teachers.

Fullan has often made the point that behaviour changes before beliefs. However, in a recent interview he admitted that is an overstatement; in reality, people "go back and forth between attitudes affecting behaviour and behaviour affecting attitude." His recommendation is that "facilitators of change have to realize that both areas need to be addressed" (1991/1992, p. 4).

On a similar note, Clark (1988) mentions "the powerful effects on teachers of reflecting on their own practice." Teachers benefitted when they were required to "stop and think, find words and reasons for their thoughts and beliefs, and take a second look at themselves and their teaching" (p. 9). In this way, experienced teachers are able to look at their work with new appreciation for the connections between theory and practice.

Ownership

One overriding theme emerges from the story of our work with teachers and administrators, and indeed from all that we did to facilitate change during those ten years. We were involved in helping teachers and administrators take ownership of the literacy lessons in their classrooms/schools. To do this, they needed to have an understanding of the language learning of children, a philosophical position based on that understanding, and literacy programs that were consistent with their philosophical position.

The concept of "ownership" is addressed below; the processes that contribute to its development are addressed in the following sections.

Frank Smith (1989) has always been a strong promoter of teacher ownership of the classroom. He contends:

> The basic question is, who is to be in charge of classrooms -- teachers or outsiders? All the prescribed programs, all the pre-specified and detailed objectives, and all the mandated assessments are impositions from outside. They interfere not only with the autonomy of teachers but with the ability of teachers and students to act together in pursuit of learning.
>
> . . . Teachers must become more professional, they must regain [gain] control of classrooms. (p. 358)

Patrick Shannon (1989) has a similar observation:

> Publishers attempt to make all the important decisions concerning goals, content, sequence, and even the language of literacy lessons, leaving teachers with control over only the pace with which they follow directions as they lead their students through the materials. (p. 627)

Shannon suggests, as an alternative, an holistic language philosophy that "offers teachers and students more control over their lessons. . . . Advocates start from the premise that literacy lessons are to be negotiations between and among students and teachers" (1989, p. 628). James Britton (1985) summarizes this position when he "urges us as teachers to create classroom communities in which children interact with us and each other to carry out legitimate personal and social tasks" (Editor's note, p. 72).

The concepts of "negotiating the curriculum" and "shared ownership" are also supported by Atwell (1987), Boomer (1988, 1989), Graves (1983), Hansen (1987), Harste, Woodward, & Burke (1984), Holdaway (1986), Romano (1987), Wells (1986), and others who have carefully examined the structure of literacy lessons.

Providing Leadership and Support

Key vehicles to help teachers take ownership of change were the teacher support groups. The origin of these groups demonstrates how leadership can build on teachers' initiatives.

Following is an excerpt from the Superintendent of Schools' Memo to Administrators, April 9, 1984:

> WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LANGUAGE ARTS
> Margaret Stevenson
>
> Teacher Support Groups
> Four years ago a group of twenty-five teachers who had spent two weeks at our first Language Arts Summer Session decided to meet during the school year to exchange ideas and provide support for each other. This was the nucleus of a network of teacher support groups that now meet once a month in the evening in various

parts of the city. Meeting time is divided between professional development and the exchange of ideas, materials and teaching strategies.

Whenever it is possible we arrange for external consultants to have some time with the support groups. Dr. James Britton, London; Ethel Buchanan, Winnipeg; and most recently, Margaret Spencer, University of London, England, have met with support groups. Group members also attend conferences and Saturday workshops to ensure that they are as knowledgeable as possible about children's learning and language development.

In turn, group members have made presentations at the last two teachers' conventions, are guest lecturers at university education classes, and assist with professional development at their own school and at other schools. They also assist the Language Arts team with district inservices and parent meetings.

Suggestions they provided for summer session leaders resulted in Dr. Jerome Harste, University of Indiana, and Dr. Dorothy Watson, University of Missouri/Columbia agreeing to provide a three day workshop (July 9, 10 and 11, 1984).

Until a few weeks ago there were five groups meeting regularly, each with a language arts consultant acting as advisor and liaison with Language Arts Services. We are delighted that a French Language Arts support group recently held an initial meeting, with thirty-six teachers and representatives of both Second Languages

> Services and Language Arts Services in attendance. One of our support group members accepted the professional responsibility of making a presentation to the new group. A great deal is happening in Language Arts! (p. 1)

There are some additions to this account of our teacher support groups. Our first language arts summer session was organized because we followed a teacher's suggestion. Michael, who had attended the annual International Reading Association conference in May, 1980, spoke to me upon returning about an exciting presentation by Ethel Buchanan, Winnipeg. He was so impressed he asked if I could arrange for her to provide a workshop for our teachers. Since she was a professional colleague of mine, I knew that the strategies and theory she would provide would be consistent with our position on the language learning of children. I was happy to arrange the workshop, which became the two-week summer session described above.

On the last day of the summer session the teachers, although excited, were sober and apprehensive when they realized they were going to be on their own, and that they would need support. They were mostly from different schools; therefore, it was critical that they have some way to stay in touch, to share their successes and concerns, and to move ahead. As a result, they organized a support group, a concept eagerly adopted by other teachers. The consultants and I attended their meetings, provided liaison with language arts activities at the district level, and facilitated the exchange of ideas and projects across all the groups; still, the responsibility for meeting and programming remained with each group. Further records indicate that by 1987 there were eight groups of elementary teachers who met regularly, and that a junior high support group had been organized. At that time there were 200 - 250 teachers involved.

Some of these groups undertook major projects. In 1984, one group planned and carried out the first student writing conference in the school district. It involved a full Saturday of workshops for 200 children, grades 2 to 6 -- a mammoth undertaking for a group of twenty teachers with full-time teaching commitments.

Another group spent a year planning and taking part in the production of a videotape explaining their language arts programs. Since this project was undertaken co-operatively with the local university, the videotape is used both with teachers and parents in the school district and with teachers-in-training at the university.

The teachers expended much creative talent and energy in these meaningful programs, striving to convince and demonstrate to parents and principals that what they were doing was in the best interest of children (Watson & Stevenson, 1989).

Networking

To build support for the changes we desired, the language arts consultants and I worked through a series of networks, both within and outside the school district.

Within the District

Since we believed that language played a critical role in learning in all subjects, we initiated and encouraged close co-operation with other subject supervisors and consultants. We sponsored joint presentations at district workshops, sessions for administrators, and school professional development days. Most important of all, we included teachers as presenters, because they speak with authority and credibility about the classroom. Supervisors and consultants can provide only the theoretical background and talk about "the way things should be" in the classroom. Teachers demonstrate "the way things are" in the classroom.

We also realized how important it was that key members of senior staff understand what we were about so we could count on their support. We provided information to the directors of curriculum and student assessment and to the associate superintendents who worked with principals. As administrators in our board often passed on articles to advance particular views, I responded to each article I received with two others that considered the issue from my theoretical position. I also attempted to arrange time for senior administrators to meet the visiting scholars we brought in. There seems little point in providing professional development for teachers if their supervisors are not educated as well.

Special information-sharing sessions and workshops were planned for principals. I also wrote a monthly paper for principals, sharing my point of view on issues they had previously identified, including the (over)use of workbooks and duplicated exercises and the teaching of thinking skills in isolation from the rest of the curriculum.

Current articles on language arts research and practice were regularly distributed to the reading specialists in the district, and a yearly session was held to update them on our work. Several of the reading specialists and principals were also members of teacher support groups, thus extending and reinforcing the network and the concept of ownership.

Undoubtedly our most significant networking success in the district was with student assessment. This networking began when two consultants were assigned half-time with language arts and half-time with student assessment to develop, pilot, and implement districtwide writing assessment at grades 5, 8, and 11. The two consultants believed, along with the rest of our team, that the assessment of language must be consistent with our stated beliefs about the way language is learned.

The value of this network became evident when we received word from the superintendent that we were to develop statements of outcomes in language arts that applied across elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. We were also responsible for developing written achievement tests based on those outcomes for students in the third, sixth, and ninth years of school. The tests were to be piloted, revised, and ready to administer in eight months. The alternative was that experts external to the district would develop the tests for our students -- not a scenario we would consider.

The guidelines agreed upon for the development of the outcome statements were that they must reflect the integrated nature of language, they must be applicable from grades 1 to 12, and they must not be great in number. As well, they must be specific enough to form the basis of the achievement tests. A tall order, but not impossible.

Our eight language outcomes were soon developed. Our greatest challenge was trying to develop questions that would reflect, as much as a test situation can, the language arts program that we supported in the schools. We wanted to be able to demonstrate what we expected teachers to do in their own classrooms. For example, we expected teachers to consciously assist students to develop language skills in all subject areas, to require students to express thoughts and feelings fluently and precisely in writing, and to provide opportunities for personal response to literature and for supported opinions. We expected teachers to ensure that their students had opportunities to write in different forms for varied purposes and audiences. Our test needed to reflect this kind of program, not only to support the teachers, but also because we knew that the test, once applied, would affect programs, since, for good or bad, this is the nature of testing (Searle & Stevenson, 1987). Through the test we hoped to give more power to those teachers whose programs were based on what we felt were sound principles of language learning.

With the understanding and support of the student assessment department, we were able to develop tests that met all the requirements. In the years since, various forms of the tests have been developed, but the constant is that students are always required to demonstrate what they can do with language. The only way teachers can prepare students for these tests is to teach them throughout the year how to read, write, understand, and appreciate various forms of fiction and nonfiction.

A further benefit has resulted from the approach taken to marking. Because writing is included, the tests cannot be machine scored; instead, teachers are employed at the beginning of the summer to work in a three-to-four day marking session. The experience of marking has proved to be a very effective language arts inservice in the district. Reading and scoring papers written by many students from across the district help teachers understand where their own teaching and students fit into the total picture.

There is evidence that the tests are having a positive influence on the language programs in the district. Besides making writing a priority, many school staffs have also broadened their approach to teaching literature. Teachers have a better understanding of the role of language in learning, and of the need for consistency among philosophy, program, and assessment. Our influence on student assessment staff has maintained for fifteen years through three directors of student assessment and other staff changes.

During his many visits, Britton constantly focused our attention on the key role of the principal in effecting change. He recommended an intensive program of professional study for principals, starting with language, as a step in securing their understanding and commitment. He also made specific suggestions to principals about professional development in their schools. Their long-range aim, he felt, should be to have each school become a professional development unit for its own teaching staff.

Attention to the inservice needs of school administrators gathered even more momentum after an incident in an elementary school in which I was involved. After several parents complained about the language arts program in one classroom, the assistant principal spent some time observing the program in action, and reported to the principal that the complaint was not justified. As the parents were still complaining, the principal asked me to review the program. My analysis was that there was no program; the children went from one workbook to another, and from there to a worksheet. The parents had every reason to complain.

I approached the associate superintendent of that area with my concern that decisions were being made about children's language learning by administrators who had inadequate backgrounds. I sought his co-operation in providing a series of workshops on the language learning of children for principals and assistant principals in his area. We worked it out together. The series of six workshops was then requested by the associate superintendents of other areas. Thus began the first curriculum inservice in the district planned just for school administrators.

We also established a pattern of having each external consultant give at least one session just for school administrators. We wanted very much to provide them with enough background that they would feel comfortable discussing language-related issues with external consultants, other principals, teachers, and parents.

We were aware, too, that principals learn best from other principals, just as teachers learn best from other teachers. We involved outstanding principals from our own and other school districts as guest speakers, and provided time for discussion. This promoted an exchange of ideas and often resulted in intervisitations. Because principals are definitely the key to change in the schools, we wanted them on-side.

Outside the District

Besides our network within the district, our language arts team maintained a professional association with those who worked in language learning at the local university, the provincial Department of Education, and other school districts. We also called upon the expertise and assistance of external consultants.

Staff Exchanges with the Local Provincial University

For three consecutive years (1980 - 1983), we were fortunate to be part of staff exchanges with the Faculty of Education of the local provincial university. Three professors worked with the language arts consulting staff, while three consultants taught courses for the education faculty. There were benefits on both sides. Consultants could draw upon their school district experience and contacts while working with teachers-in-training at the university. Working directly with teachers and administrators, the professors could experience their problems and successes firsthand.

On another level, because of their training, experience, and expertise, the professors provided a unique service. Two of the professors taught off-campus credit courses in the school district; one was an elementary and the other a secondary course in language arts. The third professor made a significant contribution to the district by conducting research into junior high school writing. This research, along with other information, resulted in a long-term focus on improving and increasing student writing in the district. We embarked on a series of workshop sessions for teachers and principals that continued for several years.

External Consultants

Over the ten years (1978 - 1988), I was able to invite many experts in language learning to talk to our teachers, consultants, and school and central services administrators. Often members of the board of trustees attended as well. The visitors' sessions varied from one-hour presentations to two-day mini-conferences. We shared speakers with other school districts and with the university; we shared expenses to secure speakers booked for teachers' conventions or conferences. Our visitors all had one thing in common -- their beliefs about the nature of language learning and about the role of language in all learning were basically consistent with ours, but each added new ideas and challenges.

Our visitors came from universities and school districts in England, the United States, Australia, and across Canada. They were often professors; many were school administrators and teachers. Of all our external consultants, there is one, James Britton, who stands out as having the most significant long-term influence on teacher change in our district. Britton first came to our school district in March, 1980, and stayed for five weeks. In 1981 and again in 1982 he returned for three weeks. Subsequently, he made yearly visits of two or three days until 1988, spending time in schools working with teachers at all levels. He also met with groups of teachers, administrators, consultants, department heads, and parents. Britton spent several half-days consulting with the student assessment staff; he took part in school professional development days and in our mini-conferences.

At the conclusion of the 1980, 1981, and 1982 visits, Britton (1980, 1981, 1982 b) sent reports to the Board of Trustees documenting his concerns. Noting the changes he had observed since his last visit, he suggested direction for the next year. Britton's reports provided strong support for teachers, as well as an understanding of the change process that came from years working with teachers in many countries. In his report to trustees, Britton (1980) summarized his views on change as follows:

> Change in the system will come about primarily, in my view, by contagion from teacher to teacher. This requires time, and immediate rewards cannot be expected. It requires, above all, consultation time for teachers themselves. I believe serious consideration should be given to any measures that would devote resources to reducing teaching loads and increasing opportunities for staff consultation within schools and between schools. (p. 1)

Change would come about, then, as teachers internalized the new ideas and tried alternate strategies, while constantly checking with each other. In time, teachers would "own" the ideas and would continue to help one another. Change would spread slowly throughout the district. This actually happened through meetings of teachers and administrators, both formal and informal. Teachers also facilitated change by visiting others' classrooms, by writing about their teaching experiences, and by sharing their writing. As Fullan (1982) has noted, change is a process, not an event. It takes time and commitment.

Helping Schools Develop Their Programs

The consultants and I faced a dilemma as we worked at effecting change in the language programs in the schools. Though we had a real sense of direction, our aim was to help teachers develop their own programs based on their beliefs about the nature of language and the role of language in learning. We wanted teachers to "own" their programs, not just adjust them according to the prevailing board policies and assessment; therefore, we needed to provide resources that would enable teachers and principals to develop consistent programs within each school.

After spending three weeks in the district, Britton (1982 b) expressed a concern in his report to the Board of Trustees:

> There seems to be an increasing anxiety among teachers that the system they work in may be becoming less supportive of what they are trying to achieve, and even, at certain points on certain occasions, hostile to it.

However, he concluded his report on a more positive note:

> But I do believe the proposal to draw up a language arts policy document and seek ratification for it at Trustee level would be an effective way of restoring confidence among teachers in the system. The Board's own statements of objectives and ________ Government [Department of Education] statements on Language Arts provide, I believe, a suitable framework within which such an instrument of language arts policy might be constructed. (p. 2)

Britton's guidelines, extended discussions with the language arts team, and Dennis Searle's work with our teachers were the basis for our position paper, written in 1982 by Searle during his exchange from the local provincial university. This ten-page document briefly describes our point of view about the nature of language and about the role of language in learning. It deals with the relationship between language and thought and more extensively with the implications for learning and using language in school, concluding with the responsibility of schools.

Our language position paper was examined not by the Board of Trustees, as Britton suggested, but by the superintendent of schools and his senior administrative staff. After discussion, it was renamed *A Language Working Paper*, and we were authorized to use it as a basis for our continuing work with teachers, administrators, and parents.

Subsequently, Searle conducted a series of workshops for principals, who discussed the contents of the document as well as the implications for programs, assessment, and reporting to parents. Searle also developed brochures at both the elementary and secondary levels that provided the essence of the document along with clear implications for school programs. The brochures, which were distributed to parents with school newsletters, were also used at inservices for teachers and administrators.

A Language Working Paper and the brochures performed several functions. They presented, in tangible form, our point of view about language -- a consistent message available to all elementary and secondary school principals and teachers. They established a starting point for individuals' reflections on their beliefs about the role of language in learning, since we, like Britton (1982 a), believed in:

> . . . the importance to teachers of a rationale, a theory that is consistent with and supportive of their practices. It provides us with a running code of operational principles, a way of

> monitoring our own practice, a way of effectively influencing other people and defending our own position. (p. 187)

In this way, teachers immersing themselves in change were finding support for their teaching. *A Language Working Paper* and the brochures also urge school staffs to develop a school position on language learning, and to look at the consistency of their philosophical position with school programs, assessment, and reporting. A teacher or administrator who knows the school position on language learning and how it relates to school programs can discuss it reasonably with parents and the community -- whether the question is about curriculum, teaching material, assessment, or the report card.

Developing a school language policy requires that the teachers and principal examine their own beliefs about the nature of language and about the role of language in learning, discuss these beliefs, and put together a position statement acceptable to all. As difficult and time-consuming as this process is, it is only the beginning. The next step is to ensure that the school's programs (including curriculum, teaching strategies, and materials), assessment, and procedures for reporting to parents are consistent with the policy. This step is critical because, in some cases, schools have developed a policy that is then placed on the shelf.

Sometimes schools don't start with a policy, but in the process of examining what they are doing, and why they are doing it, they may end up with one. After developing *A Language Working Paper*, Searle spent much of his time with us working with school staffs as they came to grips with the need for this consistency. He spent considerable time with one staff that wanted to revise procedures for reporting to parents. After one frustrating half-day session, the teachers decided that they couldn't do anything about the report card until they had examined their assessment procedures. Searle returned for a second session, which was no more successful than the first. The teachers then decided that they couldn't do justice to assessment until they had looked carefully at their programs. Eventually, the teachers and their principal realized that they needed to start with a school language policy, which they developed with Searle's help. From there they worked back through school programs and assessment until, several months later, they came up with a reporting procedure that was consistent with their policy. Printed on their reporting form, the school language policy became a model for other schools. Only through taking ownership and working through the process themselves did teachers understand the importance of a point of view about language to all aspects of their teaching.

A breakthrough in developing and implementing school language policies came in 1983 - 84, when five new elementary schools opened. Their principals were able to select teachers whose beliefs about the nature of learning were consistent with their own. Several principals chose to focus on the role of language in learning and on children's active use of language in all its forms. I hope that this decision reflected our early commitment to the professional development of administrators. As a result of the principals' focus, many of our teachers' support group members were able to teach in schools where the library was, indeed, the "heart" of the school, and where a room was planned and furnished as a publishing house for children's work.

Evidently all the work we had done over several years with teachers and administrators was paying off. We were convinced of this when, in 1985, two of our elementary schools were the only ones in western Canada selected as Centres of Excellence in Language Arts from across North America by the National Council of Teachers of English. A former language arts consultant was principal of one of the schools; a former language arts consultant co-ordinated the language program in the other. At the next competition, in 1987, three more of our schools were selected.

In 1986, the principal of one of the prize-winning schools was named an associate superintendent in charge of about thirty elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. Because this principal believed so strongly in the importance of building a school program on a sound philosophy of students' language learning, he made the following requirements of all his principals:

- During 1986 - 87 principals and school staff would develop their philosophical position with respect to the role of language in learning.
- During 1987 - 88 principals and school staff would make plans to implement their language policy.
- During 1988 - 89 principals and school staff would begin the process of implementing their language policy.

Until that associate superintendent left his position four years later, the priority in his schools was language, supported by inservice sessions and workshops for principals.

What we had begun through the power of influence was continued through the mandate of an associate superintendent. Meanwhile, the network of those knowledgeable about language learning continues to expand, as the principals and teachers from those thirty schools move to other schools and positions in the district.

Professional Development of Consultants

Language arts consultants were carefully chosen, based on their background in language studies, their successful teaching experience, and their ability to work well with others, both in proactive and reactive roles. Learning how to be a consultant, though, is done mainly through "on the job" experiences.

My expectation was that the consultants would continue to grow in their knowledge of language learning, and that they would constantly apply this knowledge to their work with teachers, administrators, and parents. To facilitate this, the consultants received their own copies of all the relevant published material, which stayed with them when they left to study or take another position. The concept of the consultants being valued "members of the club" was enhanced by having each external consultant spend a couple of hours just with the consultants. Our consultants entered into discussion with, and asked questions of, James Britton, Elliot Eisner, Margaret Meek Spencer, Frank Smith, Dorothy Watson, Jerome Harste, Arthur Applebee, Ken and Yetta Goodman, Don Rutledge, John Dixon, Donald Graves, Jane Hansen, Emma Plattor, Moira McKenzie, and others. These were valuable contacts for the consultants. As one consultant commented, "Everything was intended to reinforce what we believed about children and their learning. There was consistency in the people we brought in -- it wasn't just anybody" (Interview, February, 1989).

The record of our consultants speaks for itself. As of 1995, three have completed Ph.D. degrees, and two more are in the final stages. Two of the graduates are now on staff at the local university and the other at a college, where they are in a position to influence teachers-in-training. Six consultants have completed M. Ed. degrees. School administration claimed six consultants; five more are at central office, providing leadership as associate superintendents of schools or with the curriculum and assessment departments. Some consultants have returned to their first love -- teaching, and refuse to consider administrative roles. From this variety of positions they continue to influence language education.

The closeness and the feeling of being "members of the club" have continued. Seven years after my retirement we still meet over dinner once a month -- to share. The network is strong.

Relation to Change Theory

This story of the last ten years of my career as a language arts supervisor is now complete. I worked through a position of influence with a team of consultants to effect change by helping teachers and school administrators develop a philosophical position on the nature of language and the role of language in learning. What can be learned from this experience?

Without doubt, our experience indicates that this kind of change takes a long time. Seven to ten years are the numbers usually cited for making significant change (Fullan, 1991). This certainly has implications for those who make appointments and who outline expectations in school districts. We based our efforts on the belief that teachers and principals (as well as supervisors and consultants) need to work from a carefully considered philosophical position, and that it takes time for people to develop this position for themselves.

The processes that we used in effecting change are consistent with contemporary change theory (with an important exception that I discuss later). The concept of networking is well-established, supported, and very effective (Barth, 1990; Boomer, 1988; Fullan, 1982, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1990, 1991, 1992; Smith, 1986). Britton talks about change as being contagious, and that teachers catch it from one another. In the same vein, Smith (1992) comments:

> Effective teachers . . . demonstrate what can be done (and their own attitude toward what can be done) and they help others to do it. They make newcomers members of clubs to which they themselves already belong. (p. 434)

Inviting principals to membership in the club is just as important. In this way they, too, will take on ownership of the ideas and facilitate change.

The principal as the key to change in the school has been well documented in the literature since my years as supervisor (Fullan, 1988, 1991, 1991/1992; Sergiovanni, 1990, 1991, 1992). We recognized the importance of the principal in effecting change; in acknowledging this, we spent time and effort increasing principals' knowledge base and assisting them to apply their knowledge in their schools.

There is very little known specifically about the role of district support staff in effecting change (Fullan, 1991, p. 216). Fullan also found that consultants still do not have specialized training for their roles (p. 217). I was well aware of this at the time, and it was in recognition of this that I established specific criteria for the selection of the language arts consultants, and attended carefully to their professional development.

An important part of our work, and one which I see as an exception to current change theory, is the active role of teachers who see themselves as professionals. These professionals work from a philosophical position. They make decisions about what they will do in their classrooms and what materials they will use. Teachers will "become their own experts" when, as Britton recommended, each school becomes a professional development unit for its own teaching staff. Gambell (1988) describes such teachers as "the new professionals." Seeing teachers as "taking increased responsibility for their own inservice needs," he maintains, "Self-development is a hallmark of the new professionalism" (p. 24). We were able to encourage this new professionalism.

Such "new professionals" have banded together in groups, as in the teacher support groups described earlier. The power of these groups was illustrated at a conference of the International Reading Association in Edmonton in April, 1992. Addressing teachers, Adrian Peetoom of Scholastic, Canada, commented that the content of publishers' displays had changed noticeably over the last few years, from sets of basal readers to trade books in children's literature and professional books for teachers. This happened in response to teachers, who had decided that the use of basal readers was not consistent with their beliefs about children's language learning.

These teachers are part of a "grass roots" movement whose members are now holding their own conferences all over North America, attracting as many as four thousand registrants. Only publishers whose publications meet the teachers' standards are invited to display their materials. There is a need for more information on the power that these teachers have been able to generate through their support groups, and on the role of these teachers in effecting change.

Our district no longer has a leadership position in language arts (or any other curriculum area); however, I believe that the work we started will continue. It will thrive because we concentrated our efforts on having teachers and principals take ownership. In the meantime, "I pin my hopes to quiet processes and small circles in which vital and transforming events take place" (Rufus Jones, cited in Britton, 1982 a, p. 214).

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CHAPTER IV

PRINCIPAL AS CHANGE AGENT: DUFFY ESTABLISHING AND ADMINISTERING A NEW SCHOOL

> *The only thing that makes the leader special is that she or he is a better follower: better at articulating the purposes of the community; more passionate about them, more willing to take time to pursue them.*
>
> Sergiovanni in Brandt, 1992, p. 47

Introduction

I first met Duffy in the latter part of August, 1975, when I was an elementary language arts consultant in a large school district. In anticipation of the usual crowd of teacher-visitors to the Language Arts Centre when school opened in September, I was at work early, unpacking new books and rearranging the shelves. A young man in his mid-twenties came through the open door, introduced himself, and explained that he was a teacher new to the school district. He had contacted his principal, found out what grade he would be teaching, inquired about the location of the Language Arts Centre, and made his way there on the chance that it would be open. Impressed with his initiative and enthusiasm, I left my task and spent the next two hours discussing materials and teaching strategies with this young teacher, whom I shall call Duffy.

Thereafter, Duffy was a regular visitor to the Language Arts Centre -- attending workshops, asking questions, examining material, asking more questions. As his role changed from teacher to consultant, to assistant principal, and then to principal, he also attended the sessions provided for administrators. Both as a teacher and as an administrator, Duffy did more than attend the inservice sessions and workshops. He also took the ideas back to his school and tried them out, keeping what was relevant to his own situation.

From 1983 to 1986, Duffy was principal of a new elementary school, called Wild Rose School for purposes of this study. In 1982 - 83, the year before Duffy opened the school, he had time to reflect on his philosophical position on children's learning, and was allowed to select a focus for the new school that was consistent with his own personal philosophy. Duffy was then able to select teaching and nonteaching staff whose philosophical positions on learning were consistent with his own. This initial step eliminated the need to initiate change or to have strategies to bring staff members on-side. Duffy's main role as principal in the new school, then, was that of providing confirmation and supervision, support and pressure, to ensure that his vision was implemented.

An interesting aspect of Duffy's three years as Principal of Wild Rose School was the local and international acclaim the school's program received in a very short time. Visitors started coming the first year. By the beginning of the second year they were literally descending on the school, wanting to discuss the program and observe it in operation. Duffy and his staff were invited to speak at local, provincial, and international conferences. In the fall of 1985, barely into the third year, Wild Rose School was recognized as a Centre of Excellence in Language

Arts by the National Council of Teachers of English in a competition that drew applications from across the United States and Canada.

From 1978 until 1988 I was Supervisor, Language Arts, K-12, for the school district, that is, for five years before Duffy opened Wild Rose School until halfway through his four year term as an associate superintendent. Duffy and the teachers he selected for Wild Rose School had a common experience in their background. For five years all had been attending our language arts inservices and those of the external consultants we sponsored. In addition, Rachel, a member of my team of consultants, left to become one of Duffy's teachers and helped open the school. Rachel applied her knowledge and experience with language programs to her teaching role, and also helped the teachers at Wild Rose School. Duffy never failed to acknowledge Rachel's influence on his thinking and on his program.

In this paper I examine Duffy's role as principal of Wild Rose School from 1983 to 1986. Duffy's vision for the school is discussed, followed by the procedures and strategies he used to ensure that teachers took ownership of his vision. The paper concludes with a section that relates these strategies and procedures to recent research and literature, followed by a summary.

The following biography describes the influences on Duffy in his formative years. It establishes a framework that should shed some light on decisions Duffy made and positions he later held.

Biography of Duffy

Duffy was born in northern British Columbia, the oldest of four children of a United Church minister and his wife, who had made the move from eastern Canada. The difference between life in Montreal or Toronto and northern British Columbia was a shock to the young couple. However, they remained in the west, moving first to southern British Columbia and then central Alberta.

The family was close-knit, caring, and supportive, and Duffy had a happy childhood. Beginning school, though, was another matter. "Grade one was not a highlight for me, because I couldn't read. I was caught in the middle of the phonics/sight reading debate" (Interview, April 22, 1992). This could have contributed to a lack of confidence that persisted until high school. In spite of that, Duffy says he was always a keen student in elementary school and wanted to do well, even though he remembers being disappointed that he didn't get really high marks on exams. He also played all kinds of games and took part in sports with his friends, but nothing organized. "I remember wishing that I played hockey -- but I never really wanted to -- but the idea intrigued me" (Interview, April 22, 1992).

Duffy discusses his junior and senior high years as follows:

> Junior high school was kind of a drag. I was really into feeling insecure that I wasn't popular, that I wasn't part of the "in" group.
> But high school was a whole new adventure. We finally got to go to school with the Roman Catholics and the kids from the country schools -- as well as my group of friends in town. That was a real awakening for me. I played a lot of sports in high school -- soccer teams, basketball teams, volleyball teams. I wasn't a star, but I was certainly involved. I wanted to play football,

> but I was afraid to go out for it. (That sports theme coming through!) I was involved in curling and bowling. I was editor of the school paper and on student council. I was involved in three Gilbert and Sullivan productions and had a lead role in two of them. I had a lot of fun doing projects with my Hi C group.
>
> I was certainly not a rebel in school at all. It was fun. I remember skipping school only one afternoon. I think I got about a 70 per cent average in high school. I was really involved in a way that kids who don't feel really popular are involved. But I felt popular enough within my group.

It was at this time that Duffy realized he wanted to be a teacher.

> In high school I wanted to be a high school principal. I'm not sure that my high school principal was that big an influence on me, but I liked the atmosphere in high school. High school was great, and I just couldn't wait to get to university so I could be a teacher. (Interview, April 22, 1992)

Duffy took his first year of undergraduate study at the local church-affiliated college and lived at home, as did many of his friends. He ran for student council president on the platform that he would bring dances to the college, and to his great surprise, he won! And they did actually have a dance that year, and the following years.

> I'm showing development of confidence. Junior high was not a very good time. High school was great. [At college] I had a fair degree of self-confidence -- first of all to do that [run for president] and I was quite willing to take on some projects. I remember organizing the first

> March for Millions in the town. I was part of a group that set up a teen-age night club. My year at the college was a really good year for me. I did a lot of things -- student council, played on the basketball team, sang in the choir, and went out with a lot of different girls. (Interview, April 22, 1992)

At the end of his year in college, Duffy did something of which he is still very proud. He took a stand and told his parents he was continuing his education at the university in the provincial capital because his girlfriend (now his wife) was going there. As Duffy says, "That was a bold move on my part. To this day my father says I shouldn't have done it -- changed my plans for a girl" (Interview, April 22, 1992).

As a further confidence builder, Duffy tried out for the university swim team.

> I was the only kid who was trying out who had no winter training -- only summer training because I came from a small town. And I made the team. The second year I got to the Canadian National finals. I didn't try out again. I had proved to myself that I could do it, and I got my Block A sweater. I really left high school and left university feeling very confident. (Interview, April 22, 1992)

Duffy's love of swimming also involved him in early teaching experiences during his high school and university years.

> All through my teen years I spent my summers in pools and at lakes, teaching kids. I did a lot of teaching of kids.

> I had the best summer jobs when I went to university because I was a pool supervisor, doing what I loved to do. I got to coach kids, teach kids, and I could organize things. I always liked organizing things. Those were wonderful summers. (Interview, April 22, 1992)

Duffy was married in 1974, and comments "I think what amazes me to this very day is that she married me." He went back to university to complete a master's degree in Educational Administration while his wife worked, or, as Duffy explains, "I went back to university and she supported me" (Interview, April 22, 1992). Duffy taught in elementary schools where he deliberately sought experience at every level from kindergarten to grade 6. He also did some coaching and option teaching in junior high school. He then became an elementary consultant, assistant principal, elementary school principal, and then associate superintendent. At the time of this interview (April, 1992), Duffy had finally realized his original dream -- he was a high school principal.

Description of Duffy

This father of two teenaged daughters and one young son is six feet tall, with the athletic build that is the result of disciplined and consistent exercise. Duffy wears casual clothes with ease and appears the confident administrator. However, he comments, "I think I'm very confident, but there's an insecurity that goes along with it that says, 'You have to keep achieving. You have a role in this world'" (Interview, April 22, 1992).

Duffy's full head of hair is now pepper-and-salt, which adds maturity to his youthful appearance. In another study, Duffy is described as "a quiet, caring man. When people talk to him, he gives them his entire attention. This is true of talking with children or adults" (Iveson, 1988, pp. 76-77). Duffy's intensity as a listener reinforces his intensity of purpose.

Major Influences

There appear to have been two major influences on Duffy as he received his education and as he went on to become a teacher and administrator. They were his family and the church.

Influence of Family

> Interesting that education was important in the family. Every one of the four [brothers and sisters] has a university education. But I don't remember there being pressure that we should go to university. I don't remember that at all.
>
> Mother was the biggest influence on me going into education. She was a wonderful teacher. She spent a lot of time making life special for us. I think my interest in teaching came from my mother. She taught Sunday School and she was an Explorer leader for many, many years. My abilities in administration came from my father. (Interview, April 22, 1992)

Duffy's parents dedicated their lives to teaching and helping others. They provided models and implicit expectations for their children.

Influence of Church

Duffy's father was the United Church minister in the towns where they lived, so the church and all its related activities were a very important part of life for the family. It also gave Duffy, his sisters and brother, a certain status in the towns, which were small enough that everyone knew who they were. Duffy and his wife have continued the involvement with the church, and now their children are being brought up in the closeness of a church community.

> The church was a really important part of my life in elementary school.
>
> In junior and senior high, once again, the church played a big part in my life. We always had teen groups. I feel very fortunate. I see my own kids in a church setting right now.
>
> I remember when we left, the people in the church said something about each one of us. They said that I was a bit of a maverick, and that struck me as pretty funny. But I was taking on some issues; I had a sense of justice.
>
> My kids are in church youth groups. I will be Chairman of the Board next year. My wife has been music leader in the Sunday School for the last eight years, and together we have run the open sessions for the last five years. (Interview, April 22, 1992)

Life Experiences

> I haven't had a lot of really negative life experiences, and so maybe that gets in my way sometimes. I've always had a job, positive

> learning experiences, friendships. I came from a family that cared for each other. (Interview, April 22, 1992)

Duffy's life experiences have influenced his philosophical position on learning, teaching, and educational leadership. His great respect for children, sense of fairness and justice, work ethic, sense of purpose, and high expectations of himself and others are rooted in his secure life within the family, church, community, and school.

Setting the Stage

> *A leader's vision is "the grain of sand in the oyster, not the pearl."*
> Heifitz & Sinder in Murphy, 1988, p. 656

Duffy was provided with a unique opportunity when he was assigned to open a new elementary school in the fall of 1983. Whereas a principal assigned to an established school must effect change from within the school, a process that can take years, Duffy had the opportunity to bypass that period. Before he opened the school, Duffy had a year (1982 - 83) to reflect on his own personal philosophy of learning and teaching, to decide on the primary focus of his school, and to select his teaching and nonteaching staff. At the same time, he was principal of a small elementary school.

Duffy brought to the task his *sense of mission*, his *vision*, and his *philosophy of learning/teaching.*

Duffy had been aware of his sense of mission for many years. In a taped interview in which he reflected on his years as a student, teacher, and administrator, Duffy mentions this in different ways. At one time he comments, "There's a feeling that I owe somebody something. It's the issue that we're put in the world for some purpose." Later in the same tape, "I have to live with a combination of agitation and calm in my life. *I have a sense of purpose*" (Interview, April 22, 1992).

In an earlier taped interview in which Duffy discusses the process of planning Wild Rose School, his sense of purpose comes through as predominant in his thoughts:

> It's interesting that at that point in time one of the things I really wanted to do was to open a new school. I felt that many times principals and teachers opened new schools and didn't take advantage of the fact that they were new, that they could be different. Probably more than anything I've ever done, I wanted Wild Rose School to be unique. *I remember thinking it was almost a bit of a mission in life* -- that I had been given the opportunity to do something that was unique, and I better not blow it. That's probably what pushed me the whole way. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

This sense of purpose, this feeling that he has a mission in life, is an integral part of Duffy's character, and is reflected in all he undertakes.

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines a man of vision as one with "unusual discernment or foresight." This could be a description of Duffy. Duffy's vision was to establish a school in which the organization facilitated children's learning. His own experiences as a student and as a teacher demonstrated to Duffy that a graded organization is designed to suit the institution, not the students. If children did not meet grade expectations, it was customary for them to be considered failures. If some children learned quickly and went beyond the grade expectations, it was often difficult for them to be challenged in their own classrooms. The alternative would be to recognize that children develop at different rates, and to organize the classes to accommodate their development.

In the school Duffy envisioned, students would be able to stay with the same teacher for two years. This extended time would accommodate those students who need more time to complete a year's work, as well as those who are ready to move ahead before the end of the school year. The average students, those for whom the curriculum is geared, would progress as usual.

The most important attribute of teachers, in Duffy's view, was that they be able to look at children with empathy and treat them with respect, as individuals and as learners. It was important to Duffy's vision of the school that it be staffed with teachers with that attribute, and that both learning and teaching take place in an atmosphere of sharing, co-operation, and collaboration.

Duffy's vision of his school's curriculum was based on language being basic to all subjects and all learning. This was mentioned by Duffy in several of his taped interviews, one example being:

> There's the whole issue that I think language was essential to everything else. (Interview, December 6, 1988)

Duffy's concept of the role of language in all learning, or "language across the curriculum," was not fully developed before he opened Wild Rose School, although he certainly saw language as a tool in learning. "[Language] is the tool, and proper language development is going to assist in everything else" (Interview, October 18, 1988).

Duffy's personal philosophy of learning/teaching reflects his own early experiences as a learner and then as a teacher:

> I think one of the things that influenced me was my own experience as a student -- especially in elementary school. I was a terrible student. I didn't learn to read properly because, as the story went, I was trying to read whole words. It was at the point in time [1956] when the phonetic approach was coming in, and I wasn't reading properly. So I didn't read in grade 1 -- at all. (Interview, October 18, 1988)

The experience of being taught that it was wrong to try to get meaning directly from the printed word, and that the correct way was to sound out all the bits and pieces, made a lasting impression on Duffy. He comments, "I think that's kind of symbolic of a lot of my concerns about education -- it didn't make any sense to me" (Interview, October 18, 1988).

As a young teacher, Duffy realized that the philosophy of learning inherent in the teaching materials and curriculum he used was little different from when he was a student. Children were still being taught abstractions and generalizations, and then expected to apply them to specific situations. Duffy comments:

> It dawned on me when I was teaching at ________, my first two years of teaching, that some of the phonics or grammar or spelling rules I was teaching the grade 6 class -- they made sense to me for the very first time, and I was 24

> or 25 years old! It was an interesting revelation to me -- they [the rules] were finally making sense to me! But -- put the pieces together -- is this the way we are teaching children, because it finally makes sense to us? But the question I have to ask is -- but did it make sense to the kids? I know from my own experience [as a student and as a teacher] that it didn't make sense. (Interview, October 18, 1988)

Duffy outlined his *philosophical position on children's learning* in a paper dated February 1, 1983. A copy of the nine-page paper was provided to each teacher he interviewed, prior to the interview. By doing this, Duffy ensured that prospective teachers knew what to expect, and also what would be expected of them.

In this paper, Duffy established the importance of the physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and creative development of the child. It stated his belief that children develop at their own rate and that growth is a continuous process. This belief was the rationale for the organizational plan Duffy developed for the school.

Duffy saw children as active learners who need concrete, hands-on experiences that involve all their senses. "A child's view of the world differs from that of adults. Children need CONCRETE, first-hand experiences before they are able to understand abstract concepts" (Information for Prospective Teachers, February 1, 1983, Section A, p. 1).

Along with the experiences, children need opportunities to use language in all its forms (listening, reading, speaking, writing). This was consistent with Duffy's belief that language should be central to all learning, and that language and thought develop together. It supported Duffy's understanding that children's learning moves from specific to general, so that, for example, there would be no memorizing of grammar rules by grade 6 students. Learning about the structure of language would arise through children's own reading and writing, and through preparing their writing for other audiences to read.

Because of his experiences as a student and a teacher, Duffy envisioned children's learning as being based in meaning, whatever the subject area. Duffy believed that children are not only active learners, but that they are also continually striving to make sense of the world. He wanted children's learning in school to be as much as possible like their learning out of school; that is, it should make sense.

Duffy was very specific about the application of the above to the language learning of children. Reading was to begin with "large chunks of meaning," and broken down into the sounds and combinations of sounds of the language as the students needed and could use such information. Writing was first of all an opportunity for students to put meaning into the symbols of language. The correct way to form the symbols (letters), or the way adults put the letters together into traditional orthography (correct spelling), was not to be the first consideration of the teachers.

It was basic to Duffy's position on children's learning that they be successful, whatever their level of development. "Children find self-fulfilment in SUCCESSFUL learning" (Information for Prospective Teachers, February 1, 1983, Section A, p. 2). Duffy does not elaborate on his expectations for teachers in this paper. He mentions only that he will be staffing with "as many classroom generalist teachers as possible," and "teachers must be skilled in grouping students for learning" (p. 2). A great deal is implicit, though, in the information Duffy provides. His beliefs about children's learning and the organization he proposes based on those beliefs are clearly outlined. Obviously, Duffy intends to staff the school with teachers who have beliefs about children's learning that are consistent with his and who also have the flexibility and confidence to handle the organization he planned. This is addressed in detail in the section Selection of Teachers.

It took some time for Duffy to envision the organizational plan that would facilitate his beliefs about children's learning. During a visit to a school in Toronto in December, 1982, Duffy observed a project that involved multi-age grouping. Here he found the answers to some of his questions. Duffy had been convinced that, through a different way of organizing children in his new school, he could make a difference to their learning. However, he wasn't sure how this could be done. Duffy explains:

> I came to terms [at the school in Toronto] with something that had been troubling me. How can a teacher stay with a child for two years and still take care of three years' growth in a two-year span? I had come to terms with a two-year concept before that [That is, students staying with the same teacher for two school years]. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

Duffy then devised his Two-Year Plan, which was discussed in the February 1, 1983 paper that was provided to all teachers who were interviewed for teaching positions at Wild Rose School.

> Two-Year Plan
>
> All children should spend a minimum of two years with each teacher they have. (I am not including Kindergarten in this). Children beginning Grade One, Three and Five in the 1983 - 84 school year would stay with that teacher for two years. By the beginning of the 1984 - 85 school year, all students would be either:
>
> - beginning a two year period with a teacher (Grade 1, 3, 5), OR
> - beginning the second year with the same teacher (Grade 2, 4, 6).
>
> This cycle would continue on from that point. We would, therefore, be teachers of children in grade 1 and 2, grade 3 and 4, or grade 5 and 6.
>
> Grade One-Two Classes
>
> . . . I would like to organize our grade one classes and our grade two classes as combined (NOT SPLIT) grade one-two classes. Instead of the traditional organization, we would have four or five classes made up of approximately half the students beginning grade one and half the students beginning grade two. (Information for Prospective Teachers, February 1, 1983, Section B, pp. 1, 2)

Duffy went on to explain the advantages of such an organization: (1) The teachers would spend two years with all their students, with approximately half the class changing each year. They would really know and understand the children. (2) Flexible grouping across the total group of children in the class would be possible. Students could be grouped for various reasons, such as interests, or for various purposes, such as skill development in mathematics. (3) The teachers could accommodate the students' differing developmental levels through a variety of learning centres that would feature hands-on activities. (4) Children who took more or less than one school year in a grade could easily be accommodated. (5) Children could help each other. For example, a student who could already read could be paired with another just learning to read. Any child who could spell could help others with their written work. As Duffy commented when rationalizing his organization, "Where else in society [other than in school] are all people of one age forced to be together for such long periods of time" (Information for Prospective Teachers, February 1, 1983, Section B, p. 2)?

To summarize, at school opening Duffy planned to organize the six- and seven-year-old children into four grade 1/2 classes. The following year those teachers would receive half a class of beginners and retain the grade one students through their second year in school. This organization would then move up through grades 3/4 and 5/6.

Once Duffy had his organizational plan clearly in mind, his next challenge was the selection of teachers. From the seventy to eighty applications that he received, Duffy must choose twelve teachers whose beliefs and aspirations were consistent with his. These twelve teachers and Duffy would plan and work together to open Wild Rose School in September, 1983.

Selecting the teachers was not an easy task. Even after shortlisting the applicants, checking their references, and watching them teach in their home schools, he still had some difficult decisions to make.

Duffy decided that making a checklist and finding that a person has strengths in various areas isn't necessarily the solution. As he noted:

> There's such a difference between a teacher having all the pieces and putting the whole thing together. You can have all the right things, do all the right things as a teacher -- does it mean that you are a good teacher? No, not necessarily. So when we start talking about skills, knowledge, attitudes that we can see in a good teacher, I think maybe it's a positive direction for us to go in. But it's not the end-all either. There's something else there, and that's the whole concept, I guess.
>
> I didn't make 100 per cent choices [throughout the three years]. I guess you never will. I still think I got caught up in choosing some technically good teachers, and the empathy [for children] wasn't always there. I'm talking about very few, but it did happen. And it's really hard to detect because you can know someone who has been to all the workshops and has all the "stuff," and knows what to say. And also, to sit and watch them deal with children for a short period of time, you wouldn't pick it up. (Interview, October 18, 1988)

Duffy's comments on the difficulties in making decisions about teacher selection from the information available indicate that he took the selection process very seriously. He found that good teaching is more than the sum of the observable parts. One aspect Duffy doesn't mention is the difference in the context in which some teachers were working and the sharing, collaborative, co-operative climate he envisioned for his new school. Choosing the right "mix" of personalities, experience, and training to establish a school with a different orientation from the usual graded school entailed considerable risk-taking.

The twelve teachers that Duffy selected to help him open Wild Rose School in 1983 established the school climate, set the standards, and laid the groundwork for the ensuing years. (Evidence of the strength of those teachers and of the success of the school is seen in the 1991 list of the school district's administrative staff. Five of the twelve teachers who opened Wild Rose School in 1983 are listed as school principals in 1991.) Although it was important to fill all twelve positions with strong, knowledgeable teachers, there were some positions that were critical to the successful implementation of the program Duffy envisioned. These were the four grade 1/2 teaching positions and the school librarian. The four grade 1/2 teachers would be charged with the first stage in translating Duffy's organizational plan into reality. The librarian would be the key person to assist all teachers with their programs.

Duffy hired the following for the four grade 1/2 classes:

- a teacher with a special education background,
- a grade 2 teacher with whom he had worked in another school,
- a kindergarten teacher, and
- a language arts consultant who had been out of the classroom for five years, and whose previous teaching experience was in grades 5 - 9.

None of the four teachers had any experience teaching children aged six and seven (grades 1 and 2) in the same classroom.

To fill the full-time librarian position, Duffy chose a primary teacher with neither training nor experience as a school librarian. This was a risk that few principals would be willing to take, but Duffy explained it this way (for purposes of this study the school librarian will be called Libby):

> I had the opportunity to hire several people who had all kinds of technical library experiences, but that wasn't what I was looking for. So I think I must have had a picture of what I wanted -- a librarian who would make the library the key to the school, who would put the emphasis on lots of good literature.
>
> Libby had as much to do with making that school a success as anybody. She came from a classroom background, and she had tremendous skills with people. Libby had extremely fine talents in getting people to work together and come to terms with a few things. Libby was a real key person. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

Duffy did not take as many risks in selecting the rest of the staff. The kindergarten teacher was noted for her activity-based program. The grade 3 and grade 4 spots were filled by two teachers who had successful experience team teaching, which they would continue in their new assignments. A music teacher and an art teacher were selected not only for their training and expertise in their chosen fields, but also because they could work with the classroom teachers and take on other assignments. Two very successful teachers with proven leadership skills and organizational ability were hired to teach grade 5 and grade 6. Due to their extra responsibilities -- one taught the computer classes, while the other assumed responsibility for organizing all co-curricular activities -- grades 5 and 6 were taught separately the first year. During the second year, the classes were organized into combined grade 5/6 classes.

To summarize, Duffy's vision for his new school was to facilitate children's learning, first by organizing each class with two age-groups, and then by ensuring that each child stayed with a teacher for at least two years. Within the grouping, children were to be treated as individual learners; the curriculum was to be adapted to meet the needs of the children.

In selecting his teaching staff, Duffy placed greater emphasis on attitude toward children, flexibility, leadership qualities, and the ability to plan and work collaboratively with others than on "paper" credentials or experience at a particular level or grade.

Duffy took risks in filling some key spots with nontraditional choices; the teachers also took risks in opting to help implement an organization and program that were, at that time, untried in the school district.

Selecting the teachers was only the beginning for Duffy. Only by working with them, providing pressure and support, control and freedom, could Duffy be sure that the program he envisioned would become reality.

Duffy as Transformational Instructional Leader

> *The principal has to be the keeper of the dream*
> *and shepherd the direction.*
> Andrews in Brandt, 1987, p. 13

In the document he wrote for prospective teachers, Duffy stated:

> I see my major role as an administrator as being an educational and instructional leader in the school. A very important aspect of this is working with staff as a group and individually, preparing staff development programs based on your desired areas of improvement. I want to be visible in the school, and hope to make my classroom visits beneficial growing experiences for you and me. (Information for Prospective Teachers, February 1, 1983, Section B, p. 5)

In the above statement, Duffy spells out the areas where he will be taking responsibility as an educational and instructional leader in the school. The first is staff development, which will be planned both with the total staff and individual staff members. This would indicate that the staff, as a group, will be involved in workshops or inservices consistent with the school position on children's learning. As well, individuals will have staff development plans based on their desired areas of improvement. It appears that Duffy expects that teachers will reflect on their own teaching skills and professional knowledge, and then identify areas where they see the need to improve. The teachers' goals will be discussed with Duffy; plans will then be made to provide the means of improvement. Teaching will be a conscious act.

The second area Duffy mentions is classroom visits, that is, observations he will make while visiting classes in session. In these situations, teachers will be demonstrating their teaching skills, their understanding of children's needs, and the effectiveness of ongoing staff development. Implicit in the term "beneficial growing experiences" are previously set goals, as well as plans for follow-up that would demonstrate growth. Duffy also expects that his time in the classroom will be a "beneficial growing experience" for himself. As a reflective person, and one who sets high expectations for himself, Duffy expects to continue learning.

To summarize, Duffy sees his major role as focusing: (1) on the professional development of the teachers, and (2) on the implementation of the program in the classroom and the resulting interaction between teachers and students.

Duffy's position is supported in related literature. According to Leithwood (1990), there are four different foci identified in research on principals' styles or practice. They are: (1) an administration or plant manager focus, (2) an interpersonal relations or climate focus, (3) a program focus, and (4) a student development focus. The first two function primarily to maintain the school; they capture the practices of the majority of principals (Trider & Leithwood, 1988). The latter two, that is, a program focus and a student development focus, are less common, and, according to Leithwood (1990), correspond to what is usually meant by "instructional leadership." Also included in Leithwood's definition is teacher development, which is "arguably the most central function of instructional leadership" (p. 72).

Cooper (1989) asked 149 principals who had been judged "successful" by their districts to describe their roles in their schools. The principals were virtually unanimous in describing themselves as instructional leaders. "Their commitment to improving their schools' instructional programs is the vital thread that connects their formal training experience, their on-the-job learning, and their personal growth" (pp. 13-14). In their search for a definition, Le Sourd & Grady (1988) found that instructional leadership consisted of actions that "create and sustain conditions conducive to good teaching," and that emphasize supportive management (p. 61).

Hallinger & Murphy (1987) discuss three dimensions of instructional leadership in their definition. These are: (1) defining the school mission, (2) managing the instructional program, and (3) promoting a positive climate, which includes staff development. This definition of instructional leadership is also supported by Andrews & Soder, 1987; Duke, 1982; Hord, 1984; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Moses & Thomas, 1986 -- all cited in Le Sourd & Grady (1988, p. 61).

Duffy presented himself as an "educational and instructional leader" in the print material he provided for teachers he interviewed. He then announced his intention to focus on staff development and on the program in the classroom as it affects the students, which is consistent with accepted definitions of instructional leadership.

However, Duffy also demonstrated that he was a man with a mission, that is, a sense of purpose. And, most importantly, Duffy had a vision of what he wanted his school to become. As well, he was willing to contribute any amount of effort to achieve his vision, and to inspire his teachers to do the same.

Duffy's teachers described him as being able to inspire both teachers and parents to perform beyond what they would ordinarily do. They worked extremely hard, as did Duffy, to ensure that his vision became reality. Kirby, Paradise, & King (1992) describe such people as transformational leaders. They are able to alter their environments; that is, they do not necessarily react to environmental circumstances -- they create them. These extraordinary leaders focus on the individual development of subordinates, thus enhancing their performance and increasing organizational growth. These leaders have both a mission and a vision, and lead in a way that reinforces the mission and vision (p. 303).

Sergiovanni (1991) describes transformational leaders as having "charisma"; that is, they are able to arouse devotion and involvement through personal dynamics. He quotes Conger & Kanungo (1987, 1988) as having identified the behaviours of leaders described by their followers as "charismatic." The behaviours listed below result in extraordinary levels of commitment and performance. Followers are more likely to attribute charisma to leaders:

> who advocate a vision that challenges the status quo but still is close enough to be accepted by followers.
>
> who demonstrate convincingly that they are willing to take personal risks, incur high costs and even make self-sacrifices to achieve their vision.
>
> who act in unconventional ways in implementing the vision.
>
> whose vision and actions are timely in the sense that they are sensitive to the values, beliefs, and needs of followers on the one hand and to the opportunities inherent in the situation at hand on the other.

> who respond to existing dissatisfaction or, if needed, who create dissatisfaction in the status quo.
>
> who are able to communicate confidence in themselves and their proposals and who are enthusiastic about the future prospects for successful implementation of proposals.
>
> who rely on expert power to influence others by demonstrating that they know what they are talking about and can propose solutions that help others to be successful.
> (cited in Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 130)

Sergiovanni (1991) continues by quoting the four stages of the behaviour of charismatic leaders as developed by Conger (1989). "Stage one involves sensing leadership opportunities and formulating a vision. . . . Stage two involves communicating the vision in a fashion that makes it clear that the current situation is unacceptable and the proposed vision is an attractive alternative. . . . Stage three involves building trust with followers and other constituencies by demonstrating sincerity and commitment to the proposed vision. . . . Stage four involves demonstrating the means to achieve the vision through modelling, empowering others, and the use of unconventional tactics" (pp. 130-131).

Charismatic leaders have the ability to respond to the needs of their followers. They help their followers become better at their work. Followers are able to view what they are doing as special and significant. When leaders attend to the needs of their followers, the followers respond with higher levels of commitment, effort, and performance (cited in Sergiovanni, 1991, pp. 130-131).

This is confirmed by Kirby, Paradise, & King (1992) who maintain that transformational, that is, charismatic, leaders provide inspiration and opportunities for teachers to develop their own capabilities. Individual consideration is given to the teachers in planning for their own professional development. In order to effect change, transformational leaders provide intellectual stimulation and encourage their followers to take risks. They also model the attitudes and behaviours they expect of staffs. Modelling is viewed as a powerful form of persuasion. These extraordinary leaders are expert at communicating their expectations and challenging their followers to grow, achieve, and be risk-takers (p. 304).

The position I am taking is that, in Duffy, the qualities of an *instructional leader* and a *transformational leader* were combined, making him a *transformational instructional leader*. He was a charismatic leader who inspired teachers and others to very high levels of commitment and performance.

In his efforts to extend his vision, Duffy focused on developing the knowledge and expertise of his teachers, believing that this would have the greatest impact on student development, their ultimate responsibility.

The following section, Extending the Vision: The Development of Ownership, describes the strategies and processes Duffy used with his teachers.

Extending the Vision: The Development of Ownership

> *There can be little dispute that the most effective principals are those whose teachers have ownership in the mission of the school and a vital interest in its effective implementation.*
>
> Erlandson & Bifano, 1987, p. 35

Introduction

Duffy brought to his principalship at Wild Rose School a vision of a school organized to accommodate children's learning. There were two related parts to Duffy's vision. The first part, the easiest to implement, was the organization of children into combined classes, as has been explained under Setting the Stage: Organizational Plan. The second part, which determined the success of the organizational plan, was the action teachers actually took within the framework of the organization.

Duffy's vision included a staff that would use the organization to focus on individual children and their learning. He wanted teachers who were willing to adapt the curriculum and to use teaching strategies and material that considered the children's developmental level. As Duffy stated:

> The organization "per se" is not going to work. What it [the organization] leads to is a lot of questioning and looking at individual kids. And if your teachers are willing to do that, it will work; if they aren't willing, it won't work. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

Duffy was aware that he had a framework for implementing his vision, but that he needed a great deal of help. He could organize the classes in any way he saw fit, but when it came down to what happened in the classrooms within that organization, how the actual teaching was done, the teachers were the key people.

Murphy (1988) comments that it is rare to see an administrator develop all the operational procedures and then have his followers implement his vision step by step, according to his plan. He states:

> Top administrators tend to point out a general direction rather than a specific destination; they are more likely to provide a scaffolding for collaboration than a blueprint for action. They take the initiative, set the agenda, establish the pace, and contribute to the conversation -- all the while involving other key actors and then clarifying and synthesizing their views. (p. 656)

This is the approach that Duffy took. He provided the initiative, the vision, and the direction; other key actors, the teachers he had carefully chosen, would be entrusted with the process of implementing the vision under his leadership.

Duffy also used specific strategies to ensure that the teachers maintained ownership of the program, that is, that Duffy's vision was extended to include them. Teachers were an integral part of the decision making process. An advisory council, comprising Duffy and three or four volunteer teachers, discussed every issue concerning the administration of the school and then presented their recommendations to the staff as a whole. Teachers developed, either as a total group or in committee, every position that the staff took, from their philosophical statement on children's learning to assessment and reporting procedures, from their own professional development to their yearly budget.

Teachers developed their own curriculum and provided inservice sessions for each other, tasks they were able to complete without any outside help due partly to the strengths of the individual teachers. Other contributing factors, though, were Duffy's expectation that they would be able to do this, the arrangements he made to free the time for the teachers to carry out their responsibilities, and his attitude toward all external assistance.

Duffy was able to limit outside influences on his teachers very effectively, and establish the teachers as the "experts" in their own school. He did this at the request of the teachers by restricting and controlling the visits of external consultants so that they only provided information requested by staff; there were no return visits. For example, the science consultant was invited to the school to organize the science equipment and the science room for the teachers. He was not invited to return to provide any leadership or assistance to the teachers in developing their science programs. Also, at meetings and workshops, invited guests were asked to rotate among discussion groups; they were never members of any of the teacher-led groups. These inclusive/exclusive strategies clearly established the roles. The teachers as their own experts became engaged in very demanding activities outside their teaching responsibilities. The staff developed unity and coherence of purpose.

Throughout all his efforts to extend his vision to the staff, Duffy never lost sight of his purpose. In fact, Duffy himself identified the most critical attribute a principal needs in order to turn a vision into reality:

> My job was to bring all the pieces together. I think the reason we were successful is because we developed an overall framework that brought all the bits and pieces together. That's what I think one of my strengths is. *I think I can make connections pretty easily.* (Interview, November 8, 1988)

The ability to make connections is confirmed as an attribute of highly effective principals in an article by Bossert (1988) as quoted by Leithwood (1990). Bossert found that highly effective principals base their decisions and actions on a relatively consistent set of criteria. They can articulate direct and remote links between their actions and the instructional system.

Teachers' Growth as Professionals

During his visits to our school district, James Britton, an internationally respected authority on language and literature, often said that the ideal situation would be to have each school act as its own unit of professional development. However, before teachers in a school could provide inservice for each other without any outside help, certain prerequisites would be important. It would require that the staff of such a school be comprised of individuals who had the necessary knowledge, expertise, experience, and willingness to share. It would require that the teachers have the same basic philosophical position on children's learning; extreme differences could mitigate against teachers learning from each other. Also, it would require that the staff be balanced so there was expertise in all the subject areas taught in an elementary school, as well as in the process of teaching.

Wild Rose School came closer to this ideal than any other school I have observed. On reflection, there appear to be several related reasons. First, Duffy chose teachers with a range of expertise but with the same basic philosophical position on children's learning. There was also a common understanding of the role language plays in children's learning. Inservice records from 1978 to 1983 indicate that the teachers Duffy selected had all, without exception, attended the inservices we in Language Arts Services had provided for the district.

Second, Duffy not only recognized the strengths of his teachers, he also believed that if they shared their strengths, all would benefit. He was convinced that most of their professional development could take place through this sharing of expertise, and did everything he could to facilitate it.

The third reason is that Duffy, in his determination to ensure that his personal vision became a shared vision, made professional development a budget priority in each of the three years he was principal of Wild Rose School. And fourth, having an experienced language arts consultant on staff was a bonus. Rachel soon became the "in-house" consultant for the school. Initially, she was also the teacher with sufficient expertise and experience to make presentations to parents and community members, although others soon became expert, as well.

Careful planning for the schoolwide and personal professional development of teachers was the key element contributing to Wild Rose School becoming its own unit of professional development. Duffy's planning began even before he had staffed the school. All prospective teachers were made aware of Duffy's three priorities, one of which was:

> to develop our personal and school wide Professional Development Plan for 1983 - 84 based on what we know about children's learning and positive learning environments. (Information for Prospective Teachers, February 1, 1983, Section B, p. 6)

After Duffy had selected his teachers, but before school started, he held a retreat (August 28 and 29, 1983), at which the above priority was discussed and plans made. Professional development remained a priority, was funded, and carefully planned during Duffy's three year tenure at Wild Rose School (Wild Rose School Budget, 1983 - 84, 1984 - 85, 1985 - 86).

Professional development took many forms at Wild Rose School. Attendance at conferences, workshops, and inservices, along with professional reading, provided the main avenues out of their immediate school environment. This "reaching out" provided confirmation and renewal as well as many ideas to share with the rest of the staff.

By far the greater proportion of the teachers' professional growth was planned to take place through teachers sharing their expertise and skills with each other. This was consistent with Duffy's position that both learning and teaching are social activities, carried out collaboratively and co-operatively. He employed many strategies to provide time for teachers to inservice each other at retreats, professional development days, and staff meetings. Also, teachers were freed from classroom duties, either by Duffy or a substitute teacher, to observe and learn from other teachers in their classrooms, and to plan units of work with Libby, the librarian. Curriculum development, considered by the teachers to provide valuable professional development, was an ongoing part of their lives. This was mainly due to the nontraditional organization of students, especially in grades 1 and 2, and the requirements of their co-curricular program. This social, collaborative approach to teaching was not part of the background experience of some of the teachers; therefore, Duffy found it necessary to provide both support and pressure to ensure that his vision became a shared vision.

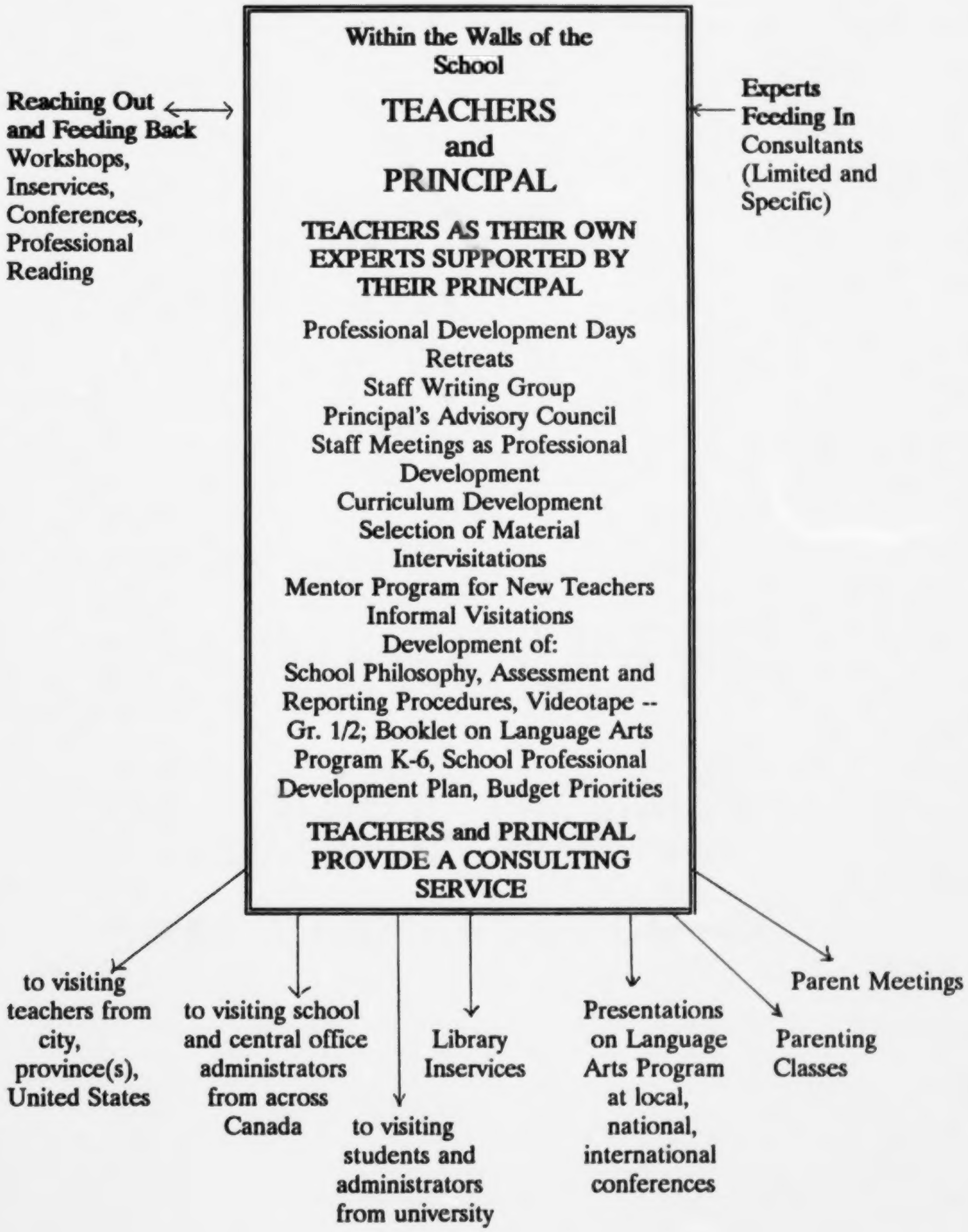
The chart, The Development of Ownership: Wild Rose School, 1983 - 1986, shown as FIGURE IV--1, is intended to demonstrate the approach that Duffy and the teachers took to their own professional growth. The double border represents the actual walls of the school.

The top left section, Reaching Out and Feeding Back, indicates the instances in which the teachers and principal went outside the school for information, strategies, and ideas. These were then shared with the rest of the staff, to be applied in the classroom. The top right section, Experts Feeding In, indicates the consultants and others who provided input or assistance to the principal and teachers. Each contribution was limited and specific, designed by Duffy and the teachers to support the goals of the school.

The centre section, Teachers As Their Own Experts Supported By Their Principal, lists the ways in which the teachers, under Duffy's guidance, inserviced each other, shared their expertise, and/or worked together. In the process they took ownership of Duffy's vision; that is, it became their vision and their program.

FIGURE IV--1

THE DEVELOPMENT OF OWNERSHIP: WILD ROSE SCHOOL
1983 - 1986



Within the Walls of the School

TEACHERS
and
PRINCIPAL

TEACHERS AS THEIR OWN EXPERTS SUPPORTED BY THEIR PRINCIPAL

Professional Development Days
Retreats
Staff Writing Group
Principal's Advisory Council
Staff Meetings as Professional Development
Curriculum Development
Selection of Material
Intervisitations
Mentor Program for New Teachers
Informal Visitations
Development of:
School Philosophy, Assessment and Reporting Procedures, Videotape -- Gr. 1/2; Booklet on Language Arts Program K-6, School Professional Development Plan, Budget Priorities

TEACHERS and PRINCIPAL PROVIDE A CONSULTING SERVICE

Reaching Out and Feeding Back
Workshops,
Inservices,
Conferences,
Professional Reading

Experts Feeding In
Consultants
(Limited and Specific)

to visiting teachers from city, province(s), United States

to visiting school and central office administrators from across Canada

to visiting students and administrators from university

Library Inservices

Presentations on Language Arts Program at local, national, international conferences

Parenting Classes

Parent Meetings

Although all teachers did not make exactly the same contribution, the sharing and joint projects meant that each teacher became an expert to the extent that each could explain and discuss the program with visitors and parents.

The principal, Duffy, was the person who had the overall picture. He could make the connections that fit the "bits and pieces" into the large picture, his vision for the school. Duffy's actions were designed to reinforce and extend that vision to the teachers and parents.

The section at the bottom of the chart, Teachers and Principal Provide A Consulting Service, indicates the ways in which the school staff shared their expertise with those outside the school. This service to others took place in two ways. One was through visitors coming to the school. The visitors observed the children in various learning situations; they then discussed what they saw, and the program in general, with Duffy and/or the teachers. The second way in which the school staff provided a consulting service was through the presentations they made and workshops they conducted in various parts of the city, province, and country.

The chart is explained in detail in the following section.

Reaching Out

Conferences, Workshops, Inservices

Wild Rose School teachers were encouraged and funded to attend conferences, workshops, and inservices, both within and outside their school district. Everyone, including Duffy, attended sessions of his or her choice. This was critical to their continuing professional growth; it was their most important way of reaching outside the school and bringing new ideas in.

Duffy had a broad view of the role of workshops, inservices, and conferences and how they contributed to his overall plan. This is illustrated in the following comments:

> The summer before school opened the whole primary staff went to a Math Their Way workshop. A Math Their Way program by itself is not going to accomplish anything. But if it fits into language and other programs, that's when you start to see some growing and some development. I had organization and structure, and now we started to look at the bits and pieces. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

This demonstrates Duffy's ability to look beyond a particular inservice or activity and see how that segment fit into the total picture. A very reflective person, Duffy was aware of this ability, and used it to advantage, especially when children's programs were affected. To illustrate, teachers who attended conferences, workshops, or inservices always discussed the sessions at staff meetings. Time was set aside for this, as it was considered an important part of staff professional development. But Duffy ensured that it didn't end there; he had a tactful way of reminding teachers that the ultimate purpose of their professional development activities was to improve classroom experiences for children. The following comment appears in Duffy's weekly staff newsletter after four teachers had reported on sessions they had attended at the annual CEL (Child-Centered Experience-Based

Learning) conference in Winnipeg, February, 1984. These conferences dealt mainly with practical and theoretical aspects of the teaching of reading, writing, and literature. Duffy writes:

> It was so exciting almost a month ago to hear reports from P.D. [Professional Development] activities many of you went on. However, it is probably more exciting seeing the ideas being put into action. I thank each of you for your desire to constantly improve on already good experiences you offer children. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, April 10, 1984)

Duffy continually and sincerely praised teachers for what they were already doing for children. At the same time, he constantly reminded them of the ultimate purpose of the school's large investment in their professional development, that is, to continue improving on the experiences they were providing for children. But this was not a one-way street. Duffy held the same high expectations for himself as he did for his teachers. The professional development sessions he attended should also benefit children.

This is illustrated in the record of a series of inservices we in Language Arts Services provided for principals in Duffy's area in December, 1983, and in January and February, 1984. The purpose of the sessions was to ensure that principals had sufficient background in children's language learning to enable them to provide appropriate program supervision. Duffy reported on the session as follows:

> Language Arts Update: ________[Area Associate Superintendent] arranged for a series of three Language Arts inservices to ensure that all principals were up-to-date on what is

> happening. I've enjoyed the two I've been to. I had mentioned earlier in the year the importance I saw in daily [student] writing, daily [student] silent reading and daily teacher reading. I know this is happening in our classrooms, but want to again stress the importance of these three parts of the Language Arts curriculum. Attached are four handouts and articles we got which I thought were good. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, January 24, 1984)

Duffy reported on the sessions he attended, just as he expected teachers to do. Further, he related what he had learned to what was happening in the school, demonstrating again his ability to fit the "bits and pieces" into the larger picture. This allowed him to give further direction to teachers with the aim of influencing children's programs.

A second example is from a staff newsletter just one month later. Again, Duffy had been attending sessions on language learning, this time at the local Teachers' Convention. The major speaker, Gordon Wells, University of Bristol, England (now at the University of Toronto), had made two related presentations on his ten-year longitudinal study of the language development of children. Duffy attended both, and found them:

> excellent, but alarming. I purchased the tapes so we can all listen sometime. What he said about children learning language certainly supports what we are doing, but made me realize that we must --
>
> - continue to give each other support and encouragement.

> - continue to inservice ourselves so that the whole language approach becomes second nature to us.
> - have confidence that how we approach the learning of language is right.
>
> (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, February 28, 1984)

This time Duffy took further action by following his comments on Wells' sessions with this strong statement:

> Language Arts Summer Sessions. I'd like to see everyone involved in a major language arts inservice activity over the next year, as I really feel it is necessary for us all to continue to develop our expertise in this area.
>
> Following is a list of summer sessions provided by Language Arts Services
> - Writing Workshop for Elementary Teachers -- August, 1984.
> - Child-Centered Experience-Based Learning -- August, 1984.
> - Read Better - Write Better - Reason Better -- July, 1984.
>
> (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, February 28, 1984)

Duffy perceived the links between his new knowledge about children's language development, the school's program, the need for the teachers to continue growing professionally, and summer sessions being offered five to six months in the future. Again, the ultimate aim was to provide better experiences for children.

Professional Reading

An ongoing and important part of the professional growth of

Duffy and his teachers was their professional reading. This is included in FIGURE IV--1 under Reaching Out because the reading took teachers, mentally, out of their own school environment and into the lives and experiences of other teachers. Just as Wild Rose teachers were expected to share and apply what they learned when they were physically removed from their environment, they were expected to share and apply what they read.

As was his habit, Duffy modelled what he expected the teachers to do. In an interview, Duffy mentions that one of the first things he did, even before he opened Wild Rose School in the fall, 1983, was "I bought books for the staff -- Donald Graves and another" (Interview, November 8, 1988). School had been underway for barely four weeks when Duffy indicated that he had read Donald Graves' book, and found one chapter so important for the teachers to apply that he had it duplicated for them. The following paragraph is found in the Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, written weekly by Duffy for the teachers:

> Writing - Many of you are using daily journals or similar ideas with your kids. Included on the blue sheets is a chapter from Donald Graves' book, WRITING: Teachers and Children at Work, which I found helpful. The entire book is good and we have several copies in the school. Ask Libby [Librarian] or me for a copy. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, October 4, 1983)

After sending that pointed message, Duffy continued to attach articles to staff newsletters throughout his three years at the school. The articles were on subjects as varied as physical education and computers. Sometimes it was a piece from a book he was reading that may not even be on education. Very soon teachers were passing articles of interest along to Duffy. Articles that would benefit the whole staff were duplicated and attached to Duffy's weekly newsletter, with thanks to the donor. Duffy also attached professional articles to some community newsletters, and Libby set up professional reading shelves in the library for both parents and teachers.

Rachel took with her to Wild Rose School all the professional books from her five years as Consultant, Language Arts Services. This was seen as very important to her and to the school, as Rachel felt she was better equipped with professional materials than most schools. Not only did it provide the staff with the latest in language arts professional reading, it also gave Rachel "some kind of authority. My expertise was recognized by the staff" (Interview, January 23, 1989). Duffy's support of professional reading, the school's good fortune in having both Rachel, with her expertise and her collection of professional reading, and Libby, a keen and supportive librarian, all contributed to the teachers' professional growth.

The preceding section describes the two main activities that involved teachers in reaching outside the school for ideas and strategies to use in the classroom and share with the rest of the staff. These were attendance at conferences/workshops/inservices and professional reading.

The following section describes how the teachers drew upon their own resources to inservice each other and become their own experts.

Teachers Becoming Their Own Experts

Duffy designed a very effective approach to ensure that the teachers remained focused on his/their vision for the school. Outside influences on the teachers were minimized; opportunities for the staff (teachers and principal) to inservice each other were maximized.

Although attendance at conferences/workshops/inservices was encouraged, they must always be "based on what we know about children's learning and positive learning environments" (Information For Prospective Teachers, February 1, 1983, Section B, p. 6). This effectively minimized any influence from a source that didn't support their vision.

Consultants, either from within or outside the school district, also have the potential to influence staff, especially if they are given the opportunity to speak to the whole staff as "experts." In many schools the principals use consultants in this way in order to focus the teachers' attention and move them in a particular direction. Wild Rose School already had its focus and its direction, which Duffy and his teachers did not want fragmented. Therefore, consultants were used sparingly and only to provide specific information (an update on the physical education program), or a specific service (organizing the science materials), at Duffy's request. There was no follow-up by the consultant. Duffy expected the staff to integrate the information into their programs, and in most cases they were able to do so.

Other tasks that consultants are routinely requested to undertake in a school, such as assisting teachers with the selection of materials, or the orientation of new teachers to particular provincial or district programs, were handled internally. While other schools called in "experts" to lead their professional development days or offer workshops at their retreats, Duffy's staff fulfilled these functions.

The decision to inservice each other rather than bring consultants into the school was made by the teachers. Although they had not known each other before the school opened, the teachers soon realized the extent of their own expertise, and felt that they did not need outside advice.

This approach placed great responsibility on the teachers at the same time as it increased their independence, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency. The teachers strove to live up to their own expectations that they could always be their own experts.

Duffy maximized the opportunities for teachers to inservice and influence each other by freeing as much time as possible for internal professional development activities. This called for creative scheduling, taking on extra tasks himself, and teaching many classes in order to free teachers to plan together and/or observe each other at work.

Ways in which teachers were encouraged and expected to inservice each other, that is, be their own experts, are discussed in the following sections.

Advisory Council

During the three years Duffy was principal of Wild Rose School, it was a one-administrator school; there was only Duffy and the teachers. Duffy was not the kind of administrator who closed the office door and made decisions on his own. He saw himself as belonging to a community of learners with shared values that give direction, order and meaning to life (Sergiovanni, 1991). Duffy's reaction to being the sole administrator was to discuss administrative concerns with a small group of teachers, part of the community of learners, on a weekly basis.

Teachers volunteered to be on Duffy's advisory council and other committees in the following way. Early in the school year, Duffy circulated a list of the year's committees -- professional development, budget, advisory council, assessment, report cards, etc. -- and invited teachers to sign up. He stipulated that those who signed to be on his advisory council should be serious about being school administrators, since they would be dealing with real school problems and helping the principal make important decisions.

I first found this group mentioned in the staff newsletter of December 6, 1983, although it was evident that they had been meeting for some time:

> Wednesday Noon Meetings: As I've mentioned before, Duncan [grade 5 teacher], Will [grade 6 teacher], Libby [librarian] and I are getting together Wednesdays at noon to discuss school wide activities and various ways of dealing with a variety of situations. I've really enjoyed these, and invite anyone to join us. I am particularly interested in having someone from K-2 join us on a regular basis to give us the perspective of that large part of our school. Please talk to me if you're interested. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, December 6, 1993)

The Wednesday noon meetings were also mentioned during an interview. Duffy comments:

> That was a mechanism for me to get some feedback, set some direction and an opportunity

> for those people to develop their own leadership skills. All three are into administration right now. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

At least two other teachers who joined the group over the three years have also become successful school administrators. It appears that Duffy's approach provided an excellent internship for aspiring administrators, as well as providing him with the feedback he needed.

The advisory council also served another function. Because administrative matters and concerns had already been discussed by Duffy and three or four teachers, they required less staff-meeting time. This was part of Duffy's plan to free staff-meeting time for professional development.

Staff Meetings

Staff meetings were used regularly as a vehicle for professional discussions. Besides providing the opportunity for discussing relevant topics such as recent conferences or professional reading, they were also used for longer, more involved working sessions. Some of the topics examined in depth were the development of the school philosophy statement, developing and refining the school professional development plan, and developing the school position on student assessment.

Duffy used several strategies to make the necessary time available. First, he scheduled the two-hour meetings every third Thursday rather than once a month, which is usual for schools. Second, all administrative notices and announcements were printed in his weekly newsletter to staff. This placed the responsibility for reading the information and taking any required action, such as registering for an inservice session, on the teachers. It also freed valuable staff-meeting time for activities that would contribute to the teachers' professional growth. Third, Duffy's weekly discussions with his advisory council enabled him to think through any concerns or situations before the staff meetings. These could then be dealt with quickly, and decisions reached.

These strategies would be considered "bureaucratic linkages" by Leithwood (1990), who maintains that creating more free time for teachers can lead to teacher development (p. 85).

Below is a series of entries found in the Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter that follows through to completion one project undertaken during staff-meeting time -- the development of their school philosophy statement.

The first entry, November 15, 1983, tells us that the topic has already been discussed at a previous staff meeting. Some preplanning has been done, and the teachers have an assignment. Their task is to reflect on their individual philosophies and come to the workshop prepared with five or six statements. Guidelines are provided:

> Staff Meeting: Thursday, November 24, 1993
> __________ [Area Associate Superintendent] will be out for our staff meeting as we develop a school philosophy statement. As we discussed at our last staff meeting, I'd like each of you to have prepared beforehand an individual or personal philosophy of education. This need not be any longer than five or six statements. I'd ask that we all use a similar format and begin with: "I believe . . . ." When writing these please consider such things as:

> - our P.D. [Professional Development] plan,
> - our School Discipline Policy,
> - our School Priorities for this year,
> - your individual goals for the students you're teaching this year.
>
> All of this information is with previous staff meeting materials. If you need another copy, please ask. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, November 15, 1983)

The second entry, November 22, 1983, just two days before the workshop, reminds the staff of their responsibilities and provides further information. Note that the entire staff-meeting time will be allocated to this workshop. Also, a decision has been reached about the procedures they will use to write preliminary statements. Discussion groups have been chosen arbitrarily, with a member of Duffy's advisory council heading each group. It is probably a safe assumption that the final planning was done at a meeting of Duffy and his advisory council. Duffy writes:

> Staff Meeting: Our November staff meeting will be on Thursday, November 24, 1983 upstairs in the library between 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. As outlined in last week's newsletter, ________ [Area Associate Superintendent] will join us as we develop a school statement of our educational philosophy.
>
> As preview to this, please have ready your individual or personal philosophy of education in approximately five or six statements.
>
> We'll divide up into three groups to write small group philosophies, and then bring these three statements together to form one school-wide statement.

> The groups will be as follows (pardon the arbitrariness of these):
>
> *Leader: Advisory Council,* Duncan
> *[K teacher]* ________
> *[Gr. 1/2 teacher]* ________
> *[Gr. 3 teacher]* ________
> *[Principal]* Duffy
>
> *Leader: Advisory Council,* Libby
> *[Gr. 1/2 teacher]* ________
> *[Gr. 1/2 teacher]* ________
> *[Gr. 3 teacher]* ________
> *[Music, Gr. 4 teacher]* ________
>
> *Leader: Advisory Council,* Will
> *[Gr. 1/2 teacher]* ________
> *[Gr. 1/2 teacher]* ________
> *[Gr. 4, Art teacher]* ________
> *[Secretary]* ________
>
> (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, November 22, 1993)

Note that, although Duffy and the school secretary have been included as group members, the Area Associate Superintendent, who is their guest and the person to whom Duffy is directly responsible, has no defined role. He will most likely be an observer, moving from group to group.

This defines the people-who-work-in-the-school as "members of the club" (Smith, 1992, p. 435), an inclusive/exclusive procedure that strengthens the unity of the group. This procedure also confirms to the teachers that they are their own experts.

Following is the philosophy statement developed by Wild Rose School staff (teachers, principal, secretary) on November 24, 1993:

> PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT --
> WILD ROSE SCHOOL
>
> We believe that Wild Rose School provides a safe and open environment where children are encouraged to progress as fully and as rapidly along the curriculum continuum as each is able.
>
> We believe that the teaching staff at Wild Rose School is concerned about meeting the needs of each child by listening, being flexible, offering choices, extending/adapting programs and providing experience as a lease for learning.
>
> At Wild Rose School we believe that communication is a triad consisting of teacher, parent and child.

The story of the development of the Wild Rose School philosophy statement concludes with this entry in Duffy's January 31, 1984 staff newsletter:

> Philosophy Statement: I'm glad to see our school philosophy statement hanging in the classrooms and throughout the school. Some of you have mentioned the discussions you've had in your classrooms about the statement. I hope everyone will take the time to do this. I talked to __________[Area Associate Superintendent] about the statement. He was generally pleased with what it said, but felt we used a few bits of educational jargon that the community might not understand. I guess this is something we must always keep in mind, but not something I'm really hung-up about. The statement gives us

> direction -- the feelings the community has about us are more related to what they see and how their children perceive school rather than what is written in a statement of philosophy. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, January 3, 1984)

It is interesting to note subsequent changes in the wording of the philosophy statement found in the October, 1985, school files. The term "lease for learning" has been replaced with "foundation for learning." "At Wild Rose School we believe that communication is a triad consisting of teacher, parent and child," now reads, "We believe that at Wild Rose School education and communication are responsibilities shared by teacher, child and parents." There is no record of the reason for the revision, that is, whether the changes were initiated by teachers, requested/suggested by parents, or both.

To summarize, Duffy used a variety of strategies to free staff-meeting time for activities that would result in the professional growth of his teachers. The staff became "members of the club" of those who had the knowledge and expertise to make decisions about Wild Rose School, its philosophy, programs, and policies. No one outside the school, not even the Area Associate Superintendent to whom Duffy was directly responsible, was a member of this club. This empowered the teachers, since Duffy clearly demonstrated that he considered the teachers were their own experts.

Teachers Learning From Each Other

One of the basic premises on which Wild Rose School was organized was that both learning and teaching were social, collaborative activities. As Fullan (1993) explains, "Personal strength, as long as it is open-minded (that is, inquiry-oriented), goes hand-in-hand with effective collaboration" (p. 14). The structure of many activities in the school required that teachers work together, and sometimes Duffy put pressure on them to ensure that it happened; for example, he would take a teacher's class so he or she could meet with Libby, the librarian. In other cases, teachers sought opportunities to observe each other in the classroom, to discuss, to gain from others' opinions, or to share experiences.

The many ways in which teachers worked together and learned from each other, in one-on-one or small group situations, are explained in the following section.

Intervisitations were proposed by the school professional development committee in 1983, and continued through the years. These were planned so that Duffy or a substitute teacher could replace a classroom teacher, who then spent the time visiting another teacher in the school. In order to obtain the most benefit from the visits, pre- and post-discussion times were always part of the planning. An additional benefit fell to Duffy, who was able to understand the students on a different basis than as their principal; he could also be their teacher.

Duffy comments about the intervisitations in his weekly newsletter:

> The second good idea from last week related to the intervisitations going on between staff members. I am enjoying them, I think you are learning something, and it is giving the children an interesting message about us learning from

> each other. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, November 20, 1984)

Informal intervisitations, arranged between the teachers for their own particular purposes, were also encouraged. Rachel notes that Mac, the grade 4 teacher, who had expertise in integrating drama into the curriculum, involved her grade 1/2 class in some drama activities while she watched and learned. Rachel comments, "I wish we had had time to do things like that more often, but we were so busy" (Interview, September 23, 1993).

This feeling that they had so much expertise that could have been shared was also expressed by Duffy, as follows:

> I wish we had done more informal inservice. I would do some parts of that differently. I think we didn't take the time to share on an informal basis in the school as much as we should have. There was so much expertise there. We could have done a lot more than that. I'm not going to regret that either. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

Duffy's comments are an indication of his reflective nature and also of his awareness of the importance of the parts that were contributing to the total picture.

All of them -- teachers and principal -- had taken on incredible work and professional development loads. It was probably inevitable that "something had to give," and that it was the informal, optional activities that were sacrificed.

During an interview on September 23, 1993, Rachel commented that the most important professional growth for the grade 1/2 teachers was gained through developing the students' programs. In 1983 - 84 there were five grade 1/2 teachers, each with a class of students aged five to seven years. The school philosophy required that these students not be treated as a split grade, but as a group of children in different places on the continuum of learning. To the teachers, this meant that much of the available graded material was difficult to use. Therefore, they decided that they would develop their own curriculum and find resources with the appropriate spread in difficulty in order to accommodate the students.

The five teachers decided to approach student learning through themes. Some of these were related to the seasons or to holidays; others were topics of interest to students, such as Pigs! or Apples. Some of the more familiar topics were Nursery Rhymes and Families. Curriculum was developed for each theme, relating it to social studies, language arts, and science concepts. Supportive print and nonprint resources were selected. The print material, both fiction and nonfiction, ranged in difficulty from picture books to about grade 4. These were used to teach reading and writing skills. Libby, the librarian, assisted the teachers with theme development and material selection.

Rachel commented that the boxes of theme materials are still in use at the school, ten years later (Interview, September 23, 1993).

Organizing the co-curricular program was the responsibility of Duncan, who also taught grade 5. Every first and third Thursday afternoon the school took on a different look when the teachers and students of an older and a younger class, such as grade 4 and grade 1/2, worked as "buddies" on the schoolwide theme. All the children in the school, in pairs, worked on the same theme at the same time. Four or five schoolwide themes were developed every year on topics as diverse as Poetry, Citizenship, or Nutrition.

The benefits of having older and younger students work as buddies extended beyond the co-curricular program to the hallways and playgrounds. The concept that children of all ages can learn from each other in school as well as at home was reinforced. Both children and teachers were placed in the position of experiencing learning as a social activity involving co-operation and collaboration.

Duffy had been looking for "a librarian who would make the library the key to the school" (Interview, November 8, 1988). He found the ideal person in Libby, who "had tremendous skills with people."

Duffy comments further:

> Libby had extremely fine talents in getting people to work together and come to terms with a few things. It was through her efforts that we did such things as the research project. There was a research continuum [for students] that was bought into by every staff member. I think that's exciting. We were concerned that kids left that building with some skills in research. Some of the things I saw Libby do were unbelievable -- breaking down the research skills into simple steps that kids could make some sense of. I learned so much from that experience. Libby was a real key person. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

The teachers were appreciative of Libby's role in helping their students develop research skills. Another of Libby's roles, though, was not within the experience of some of the teachers. This was the role of the librarian as the person who collaborates with teachers on the development of units of study -- whether science, social studies, or literature. Duffy comments:

> Libby was coming from a classroom background. She had tremendous skills with people. She was frustrated at times that everyone didn't want to buy into something that she knew was good. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

Duffy was sensitive to this, since he saw the library and librarian as key to the success of the school's nontraditional pattern of organization, and thus to his vision. He handled it in this way:

> There were many messages that I gave the staff [about collaborating with Libby]. I went in and taught their classes at the beginning. I scheduled them so they each had planning time with Libby. I forced them into it. They got into the habit that it was an expectation. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

The combination of support and pressure (taking over the classroom so the teacher could meet with Libby) achieved Duffy's purpose. His final comment on the matter is:

> I don't think there was one teacher who, over the three years, didn't do at least one unit with Libby. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

Teachers as Workshop Leaders

There were at least six teachers on Wild Rose School staff who were qualified to lead other teachers in a workshop or make presentations to parents. Will, their computer expert, spent weeks setting up the computers for the students to use, and to prepare for a staff workshop. Rachel was the in-school language arts expert; Libby was soon in demand to inservice other librarians and administrators. Mac, the grade 4 teacher, who had been a member of the school district drama troupe, assisted teachers to integrate drama into their curricula. Duncan, the co-curricular organizer, spoke confidently about his work. Lil, the kindergarten teacher, with recognized expertise but no previous experience making presentations, became a member of the team that provided parenting courses. Marlene, the grade 3 teacher, initiated the publishing house. She taught aides and parents how to make it work, then turned it over to them. This high level of involvement by staff was an expectation.

The concept that the teachers were their own experts, and as such would be inservicing each other, was made clear just weeks after Wild Rose School first opened its doors.

In October, 1983, Wild Rose School staff held their first *professional development day.* The schools in this district have two days each school year when staff engage in professional development activities; all classes are suspended. The workshop on this day was provided by the grade 6 teacher. Duffy's announcement in the staff newsletter reads:

> Our first school P.D. [Professional Development] Day will be on Friday, October 28, 1983. Will [Grade 6 teacher] will lead us in a variety of computer activities, using the machines we have here. Thanks to Will for the huge commitment he's put into all the computer activities. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, October 18, 1983)

Duffy used the same strategy each year in planning the *annual retreat.* Retreats were held for one and one-half days at the end of August each year, just before school started. They focused on professional development and school planning activities.

At the retreat in August, 1984, in preparation for Wild Rose School's second year, Rachel, Duffy, and Libby led the staff in a workshop on children's writing. Duffy also signalled his intention to pay *attention to teacher writing.* There is a strong belief among many teachers and administrators that those who teach children to write should also be writers. Duffy held that point of view.

Duffy writes about plans for the retreat:

> Writing Session. We are all going to spend time writing about a personal professional success we had last year -- something you did in your position. Bring your journal for your own reference, if you kept one last year. (Letter to Wild Rose School Staff, August 7, 1984)

The teacher writing session must have been successful, as plans were made to get together to write and share writing once a week.

The teacher writing groups are next mentioned as follows:

> Our early morning writing group had a super session last week, not so much because of the writing but because of the sharing of concerns that came with the writing. Yes, we are a terrific group of people who care a lot for many. "Thank You" to each of you for that. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, November 13, 1984)

To summarize, Duffy and the teachers recognised their strengths and took advantage of them. They learned as much as possible from each other through intervisitations, from curriculum and program development sessions, and through working together in the co-curricular program. The library, situated in the centre of the school, was the heart of the program. Libby, the librarian, worked with all teachers and all students. This focus on the library was reinforced by Duffy, who went into the classrooms to release teachers so they could work with Libby. Wild Rose School teachers also inserviced each other in more formal situations, such as professional development days, staff retreats, and staff writing workshops.

Teachers and Principal Provide A Consulting Service

Wild Rose School had been open for only four weeks when the teachers received the first of the steady stream of visitors they hosted over the three year period. The demands took their toll on the staff, as they took time to explain the program to visitors who came from as close as the community to as far away as London, Ontario and Portland, Oregon. The number of visitors, along with requests for presentations locally, in other school districts, and at conferences in various parts of the country, led Duffy to remark, "I felt, especially in the third year, that we were providing a consulting service for the district and for the province out of that building, and I found that to be very frustrating" (Interview, November 8, 1988).

The first requests for school visits appeared in the October 4, 1983, staff newsletter, one month after the school opened its doors. Duffy writes:

> School Visits. I've had two requests from groups to visit Wild Rose School. One request came about six months ago, the other about two weeks ago. I'd like you to be aware of these:
> a) Friday, October 14, 1983, 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Dr._____, School Trustee, would like to bring about 30 members of the Faculty of Education [Provincial University] as part of a P.D. day for them. They are interested in the building, how we are using it, and our programming.
> b) Thursday, October 20, 1983 - p.m. A group from the Western Canada Administrators' Conference will be here looking at "New Schools." Their interest is mainly in seeing the building.
>
> I hope neither of these causes too much inconvenience. The expectation is that we carry on classes as usual. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, October 4, 1983)

Duffy's reference to visitors wanting to look at the school rather than discuss the programs relates to the prize-winning architectural design of the school. Having the visitors focus on the design of the school during the first year the school was open was probably a bonus for the teachers. It gave them time to learn how to work together and to develop the programs that supported children's learning in their nontraditional organization.

The beginning of the feeling that they were providing a consulting service is evident early in the second year, that is, the 1984 - 85 school year. There is also a hint of the frustration that Duffy expressed in his interview of November 8, 1988. Duffy's newsletter entry reads:

> Visits to School. Once again I am beginning to get requests from other teachers and the university to have visits to our school. I know we have a great deal to offer. However, I am concerned that they [visits] do not become too common and get in the way of classroom operation and of the job I have to do. I would like some feedback on this issue. Should we set aside one day a week, and try to have visitors on that day only, if at all possible? Should we open our doors to visitors at all times? Please react on the feedback sheet. It is important that we feel comfortable with this. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, September 18, 1984)

There is no information in further newsletters about the results of the feedback sheets. The next reference to visitors is in a November newsletter which contains an item that indicates that the grade 1/2 teachers, especially, have had more visitors than they feel they can handle. This is not surprising, since, at that time, they were the only grade 1/2 teachers in the district who were dealing with the two age groups, six- and seven-year-old students, as a combined, not a split, class. Their solution was to develop a videotape of their classrooms that could be used to inservice other teachers. Duffy writes:

> This Week's Good Idea. About two months ago the grade 1/2 teachers discussed the possibility of having a videotape production made showing highlights of their program. This had resulted because of many demands to see what is happening in those classrooms from teachers outside this school. I have finally been able to arrange for this to happen at no cost to us through the people downtown [school district central office staff]. They will look after the

> technical aspect of it as long as we provide the information. We'll have to consider the content of this [videotape] after Christmas. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, December 17, 1984)

In this next newsletter item, Duffy once more demonstrates his ability to focus and to differentiate between what is of critical importance and what is facilitative. His comments are encouraging and supportive of the teachers' work. Duffy writes:

> Last Tuesday I shared with some of you the real pride I felt about this school as I showed four fellow principals the working and operations of this school. It is particularly nice when people begin to see beyond the building and look at what people are doing within the structure. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, Monday, April 29, 1985)

On Saturday, March 16, 1985, Duffy presented his position on language learning and the assessment of children's language at a local conference of the International Reading Association. This came about because one of his teachers was on the planning committee for the conference. Duffy was on a panel addressing various aspects of the assessment of language. I was also on the panel, so was able to observe the following.

Duffy spoke with conviction, great respect for children, and understanding of their learning. Teachers and principals questioned him closely, intrigued by what they heard. A publisher's representative from Toronto asked if Duffy would put his speech in written form for their newsletter.

There were, however, some negative responses. Concerns were expressed about the focus on children's learning rather than on teachers teaching what should be taught. Those who were negative were concerned about loss of control -- in my experience a common response from teachers who are forced to look, however briefly, at the flip side of teaching, which is learning.

Duffy comments on this in his newsletter to his teachers:

> The afternoon ended with a few people expressing concerns about our approach to language learning, and in some ways I feel they were really negative. The reason I mention this is that I think it is so important that each of us act upon ideas that we really believe in. In doing this it is important that we be accepting of other people and their ideas. We do not always do everything like someone else, but part of our strength is in diversity. Lack of confidence in one's self and feelings of insecurity are natural. My concern in what I observed was this lack of confidence on the part of teachers being exhibited in really negative and destructive ways. That is too bad when there is always so much we can learn from fellow teachers. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, Monday, March 18, 1985)

During 1985 - 86, the third year that Wild Rose School was operating, the importance of the library as the heart of the school's program was well established. Visitors who wanted to focus on the library program and its relationship to the learning and teaching ongoing in the classrooms started arriving in the fall. One example follows:

> Wednesday, November 27, 1985. Libby and I are hosting some visitors from out of town during the morning. Their focus is co-operative

> teaching and working in the library. They were told that our library would be a really good place to learn in. Thanks Libby, for that. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, Monday, November 25, 1985)

The number of visitors continued, as well. Duffy writes:

> Monday, March 10 and Tuesday, March 11, 1986. I had a request from the Yellowhead School Division to have some teachers and principals spend some time in our grade 1/2 classes between 9:30 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. I have not yet cleared this with all grade 1/2 teachers, but wanted everyone to be aware of this. I think I will then ask anyone interested in visiting us to wait until after spring break -- an attempt to unclutter our lives!!! (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, Monday, March 3, 1986)

Duffy and his staff also continued to inservice other teachers. Duffy writes:

> Tuesday, April 15 and Tuesday, April 29, 1986. The library inservices for about 50 teachers each day will be held in our library from 1:15 to 3:30 p.m. Thanks for the names of children sharing their writing. The sharing will be with one adult only. Please note that the library will be closed the two afternoons. Thanks for your co-operation. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, Monday, April 14, 1986)

The reasons for Duffy's concern about providing a consulting service for the district and his frustration with the situation are becoming more evident. There would be substitute teachers in the school for the half-day of preparation and again for the two inservice presentations. Besides preparing and presenting inservices for the district, Wild Rose

School's teacher-presenters would need to prepare detailed plans for substitutes for the three half-days. The school would lose the services of four of its top people for those three half-days, and there is always the possibility that parents will complain. Parents are often understandably upset when teachers are out of the classroom for reasons other than illness.

At the same time, the number of visitors picked up again. Duffy notes:

> Friday, May 2, 1986. I was asked to show a group of 5 people from Kitchener, Ontario around our school between 8:30 and 10:00 a.m. The focus is school based budgeting. We will probably take a quick look around the school and then spend most of the time talking in the conference room. This group is spending the whole week in our district. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, Monday, April 28, 1986)

As well, requests for inservice sessions continued, requiring more absences and more substitute teachers. Duffy writes:

> This Friday (May 9, 1986), Libby, Rachel, Duncan and I will be in Banff making a presentation for the annual conference of the English Language Arts Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association. I would like three or four books that have been published by your students. Thanks. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, Monday, May 5, 1986)

The following week Duffy provided this feedback to the staff regarding their Banff presentation:

> It was quite an experience, speaking in the Banff Springs Hotel. The room we spoke in was about

> ten feet wide and sixty feet long -- really quite intimate!! I think the presentation went well and we were able to provide a bit of sharing to others. When I had finished speaking, Libby whispered to me that she was very proud to be part of this staff and school. I, too, had that same feeling as I listened to Rachel, Libby and Duncan talk about the things we do. Probably the neatest thing is that what they were saying was not just about their individual programs, but reflective of everyone here. I hope that some pride is felt by each of you. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, Monday, May 12, 1986)

This was followed by an invitation for Duffy to speak at the annual conference of the International Reading Association to be held at Anaheim in May, 1987. Again, Duffy credits all the teachers in the school, as he did following the Banff conference. He writes:

> Last week I received a call from a man in the United States [Dr. Ralph Peterson, University of Arizona] who is planning some sessions for the IRA conference in California next May. He called to ask if I would speak at a session, telling the principal's perception of a language based program and how to get there. The reason I am telling you this, however, is something he told me during the call. He was quite chatty! He told me the reason he was calling me was that Dorothy Watson [Dr. Dorothy Watson, University of Missouri/Columbia] really thought Wild Rose School should be represented at this conference. She had told him this was the best whole language school she had ever been in. This comment, of course, has gone through three or four people by this time, but the intent is very clear. We (you and I) are being recognized as leaders in the field of language

> arts. Even though I am the one who gets the calls, it is each of you who daily achieves excellence with children and who deserves the real credit. I am very proud of this school and each one of you. Thank you. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, Monday, June 2, 1986)

To summarize, Duffy and his teachers provided a consulting service to teachers and administrators from the district and from across the country. They did this by accepting visitors into the school and classrooms, by making presentations and providing workshops, both locally and for outside conferences. They also inserviced parents and community members through parent meetings, by offering parenting classes, and by modelling ways of working with children that maintained student confidence and self-respect.

Inservice for Parents

Parents were heavily involved in all aspects of school life; in fact, the school had a paid aide whose job was to co-ordinate the work of the parent volunteers. The need for a co-ordinator became clear as I read through the lists of parent volunteers in the fall, 1985 documents. There were at least fifty parents who provided assistance in the classroom and library, with field trips, and in the publishing house. Parent involvement, as evidenced by the number of volunteers, was exceptional. However, there is no evidence in the school documents of requests for the formation of a formal parent advisory group. Duffy, though, took the unusual step of offering them a *parenting course*. As outlined in the Wild Rose School Newsletter to Parents, October 7, 1985, the course was to be held once a week for twelve weeks (January 6, 1986 to March 24, 1986), and would be led by Duffy, his kindergarten teacher, and two community members. Some of the topics to be covered were Understanding Your Child, Goals of Misbehaviour, Effective Discipline, Family Meetings, and Parents as People.

Although leading parenting sessions might be seen as an over-commitment for a very busy principal, it was entirely consistent with Duffy's goal to provide the best possible experiences for children. He had already spent two years working with the school's teachers. It was a natural next step to work with parents, who are a child's first teachers. Involving the kindergarten teacher, the child's and usually the parents' first contact with Wild Rose School, provided confirmation and continuity.

Duffy emphasized the importance of the role of his kindergarten teacher as the parents' first contact with the school, as follows:

> [Lil] brought parents in at the kindergarten level. This was their first exposure to the school, and they bought into the school. This was very important. By the time the kids got into the grade 1/2 program, there was no question in the following years. But there were a lot of questions the first year. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

Parent meetings were held regularly to provide information about school programs and other aspects of schooling. Sometimes there were speakers; at other times the parents, principal, and teachers viewed a videotape of their own selection, such as Barbara Coloroso's Parenting Session, followed by a discussion.

However, the speaker at the very first parent meeting held at Wild Rose School in September, 1983, the month the school opened, was one of their teachers. Rachel, former language arts consultant, with five years' experience speaking at parent meetings in other schools, was the person selected by Duffy and his planning committee. Rachel's topic was The Language Program at Wild Rose School.

At the March 20, 1984 meeting, Will, the grade 6 teacher, was highlighted. He made a presentation to the parents on the school's use of computers, and demonstrated the use of various programs. Parents then had the opportunity to sign up for two hours working on the computer of their choice, under the direction of a grade 6 student. Parents, as well as teachers and students, were expected and encouraged to apply what they had learned.

There were other ways in which teachers inserviced parents, both formal and informal ways that extended over a period of time. In an interview, Duffy gives credit to his grade 3 teacher who *trained parents to run the publishing house:*

> I didn't mention the publishing house. That happened because of Marlene [the grade 3 teacher]. Marlene isn't the person to keep it going, but she got it started, and an aide took it over. It was her pride and joy. Marlene was wonderful at empowering people. We had wonderful support staff. They gave far beyond -- they bought in, too. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

Duffy and his teachers also inserviced the parents through their day by day contacts with the children and the consistent application of their philosophy. The most welcome recognition they could receive for this came from a mother who spent a great deal of time volunteering in the school. She mentioned to Duffy that she had learned a great deal about working with children from observing Duffy and the teachers, and that she was trying to apply what she had learned at home with her own family.

Summary

After opening Wild Rose School in September, 1983, Duffy's immediate challenge was to extend his vision to his teachers, and to ensure that they were as committed to its implementation as he was. In his own words, Duffy wanted the teachers to "buy into" his vision, that is, to take ownership.

They must first understand that the purpose of the organization of children in Wild Rose School was to enhance children's learning. Beyond that, they must translate this understanding into curricula and programs which they would then implement. All must be consistent with their beliefs about children's learning.

This was to be accomplished in an atmosphere of openness, co-operation, and collegiality. Duffy expected to have an "open door" school. He comments:

> Anybody could come into Rachel's classroom. Anybody could sit and watch Libby teach. And that really opened it up. The doors were never closed in that building. Everyone had such an important part. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

Besides the physical act of opening your classroom door to teachers from inside and outside the school, there is also the concept of open-mindedness. Teachers at Wild Rose School were never allowed to close their doors and "do their own thing." Everything they did was a team effort -- teachers at a grade level planned together; teachers at different grade levels planned together for the co-curricular project; teachers planned with the librarian while Duffy taught their classes. The teachers and Duffy had to be open to suggestions and flexible enough to make changes based on the suggestions.

The ways in which the staff worked together, with Duffy, and with the parents, required co-operation.

Rachel comments on the need for total staff co-operation as follows:

> All of us had to work together to make it work. What kinds of things can we do; what can't we do. (Interview, January, 1989)

Both openness and co-operation could be considered subsumed under the concept of collegiality. Barth (1990) explains that collegiality seldom shows up in the literature on effective schools. He offers a "good operational definition of collegiality in schools" as provided by Judith Warren Little (1981):

> Collegiality is the presence of four specific behaviours, as follows: Adults in schools *talk about practice.* These conversations about teaching and learning are frequent, continuous, concrete, and precise. Adults in schools *observe each other* engaged in the practice of teaching and administration. These observations become the practice to reflect on and talk about. Adults engage together in *work on curriculum* by

> planning, designing, researching, and evaluating curriculum. Finally, adults in schools *teach each other* what they know about teaching, learning, and leading. (cited in Barth, 1990, p. 31)

According to the teachers, this is an accurate description of part of what actually happened in Wild Rose School from 1983 to 1986, under Duffy's leadership.

To maintain the focus, ensure consistency, and keep the staff moving and constantly learning, Duffy employed "benevolent authoritarianism, a combination of muscle, tenderness, and tutoring" (Huberman, 1983, p. 24). Teachers were placed in a position where they must work co-operatively; Duffy found and made time to allow this to happen. Duffy, at the request of the teachers, controlled and limited access to his teachers by district consultants, thus putting more pressure on the teachers to rely on each other and become their own experts. This developed teacher confidence and cohesion within the group.

Duffy expected the teachers to be professional and capable, and recognized that they were. As Rachel comments:

> When people recognize you can do certain things, you learn that you know more and can do more. (Interview, January, 1989)

To improve their knowledge base, all of them, including Duffy, continued to grow professionally. Duffy encouraged his teachers to attend workshops, conferences, and summer sessions, and to read professional literature. Duffy also expected that his teachers would apply what they learned in the classroom. He reinforced this with timely observations and comments.

In November, 1983, three months after Wild Rose School opened, Duffy, the teaching staff, and the secretary developed the school's philosophical position on children's learning. Until this time, their philosophy was implicit in all their work with children, both inside and outside the classroom. Their philosophy, that is, their beliefs about children and their learning, was now made explicit. It was printed on chart paper and then displayed and discussed in classrooms. Typed copies were distributed to parents along with their monthly newsletter from Duffy. The philosophical statement then became, officially, the foundation for all the activities and programs developed in the school.

Duffy both articulated and demonstrated his belief in the importance of controlling the process used to reach his goal. He demonstrated this in the procedures he used to ensure that his teachers worked together and stayed focused -- organizing so that teachers inserviced each other, finding and making time for teachers to plan and work together, reminding teachers that new knowledge and strategies were to be applied in the classroom, and limiting outside access to his teachers. Duffy also expected his teachers to focus on controlling the process of learning in the classroom, and on providing a rich input for the children. He explains:

> I am coming to believe in having more control over the process. If we know there are some things that will improve children's learning, aren't we negligent if we don't do something about it? (Interview, November 8, 1988)

Duffy had the ability to make connections between the everyday, sometimes mundane, happenings in the school and his goal of providing better learning experiences for children. He recognized this ability as one of his strengths. Duffy states, "I think I can make connections pretty easily," and "My job was to bring all the pieces together" (Interview, November 8, 1988).

Duffy comments further:

> I believe my management style and my discipline style and the learning style I want to see kids involved in are all part of the same package. (Interview, October 18, 1988)

Duffy had a consistent philosophy, based on great respect for children and belief in their ability to learn, that influenced every part of the children's school lives.

Duffy inspired his teachers to extremely high levels of commitment and work. FIGURE IV--1, The Development of Ownership: Wild Rose School, 1983 - 1986 (p. 101), lists what the teachers were able to accomplish, relying primarily on their own expertise. They wrote a philosophical statement of their beliefs about children's learning, developed curricula and programs, selected material, and developed assessment criteria and their own method of reporting to parents. They wrote budgets, acted on the principal's advisory council, ran a schoolwide co-curricular program, and developed a videotape. They offered parenting classes and inservice sessions for parents, organized a staff writing group, and inserviced each other on everything from computers to drama in the classroom.

The teachers and Duffy were also in demand as speakers and workshop leaders, both inside and outside the district. In fact, the amount of inservice they provided caused Duffy to comment that they were providing a consulting service for the district and for the province.

It is important to note that all the activities listed in FIGURE IV--1 were done outside school hours. Duffy's teachers still spent five hours a day with their students, prepared lessons and teaching materials, read and evaluated student work, wrote report cards, conducted interviews with parents, and dealt with all the issues and concerns that arise in a classroom and a school.

Duffy's ability to inspire this level of commitment was acknowledged by the teachers. More than one teacher said they all "worked like dogs," and that there was a feeling that some of the teachers worked like that "for Duffy!"

In the preceding pages I have used many quotes from Duffy's weekly newsletter to his teachers. Embedded in them are indications of his great respect for his teachers, for their commitment, and for the work they were doing. Duffy often commented that, although he was called upon to represent the school, the teachers were the ones who really deserved the credit.

Duffy in Perspective: Principal as Change Agent

> *If one wants specific results as an administrator, one has to shape them, which entails some benevolent authoritarianism, a combination of muscle, tenderness, and tutoring.*
>
> Huberman, 1983, p. 24

In this section, the strategies Duffy used and the results he obtained are related to recent research and literature on the role of the principal in effecting change.

Duffy was a principal with a vision of a school organized to facilitate children's learning. The selection of teachers was based on the candidates' personal philosophy of the nature of children's learning, and their ability to translate this position on the nature of learning into programs and activities, both inside and outside the classroom. Duffy insisted that there be consistency between beliefs and practice.

In order to accomplish this, Duffy emphasized staff development with the major focus on teachers becoming their own experts. At the same time, he encouraged teachers to take ownership of his vision by involving them in decision making. Duffy accomplished this by employing a combination of "pressure and support" (Fullan, 1982, 1991), or "benevolent authoritarianism" as Huberman describes the process (1983, p. 24).

The importance of staff development in projects designed to effect change in schools is confirmed in an extensive, four-year study of federally funded projects in the United States by the Rand Corporation. Evidence from this Change Agent study indicates that "a primary motivation for teachers to take on the extra work and other personal costs of attempting change is the belief that they will become better teachers and their students will benefit" (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978, p. 75).

The Rand Change Agent study reported two complementary elements that supported change. *Staff training activities* (workshops, inservices, conferences) by themselves were found to be effective in the short run. However, for the longer-term outcomes of teacher change and continuation, staff training activities had to be supplemented by *staff support activities*, such as project meetings and teacher participation in decision making (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978, pp. 76, 77).

Duffy's approach was to use both procedures found effective by the Change Agent study. He provided time, resources, and support for staff development at the same time that he facilitated teachers becoming their own experts and involved them in making decisions that would affect their work. All this was done in an effort to have teachers take on ownership of Duffy's vision.

In using the approach and strategies that he did, Duffy was successful in developing his school as a unit of change. One method Duffy used, that of involving teachers in decision making, was still controversial at that time (1983-86). Sarason (1990) describes a 1988 Carnegie report that recommends just such involvement of teachers on the basis that those who are vitally affected by decisions should stand in some meaningful relation to the decision making process. It is interesting to note that this recommendation was opposed by the U.S. Secretary of State at that time, William Bennett, who regarded the recommendation as "mis-guided, ill-advised and divisive." The organizations representing school administrators were also critical of the proposal (pp. 55-63).

In a paper presented by Leithwood, Stanley, & Montgomery at the annual meeting of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies, Vancouver, June, 1983, the observation is made that effective principals rely largely on informal means of involving their teachers in decision making (p. 16). During that same year, Duffy was already involving his teachers extensively and formally in decisions that affected their work.

Subsequent studies and literature support Duffy and make a strong case for developing staff commitment by involving teachers in decision making (Barth, 1988; Lieberman, 1988; Sarason, 1990; Sergiovanni in Brandt, 1992).

Lambert (1988) agrees that staff training alone is ineffective in long-term change projects. However, she fails to recommend any further strategies for making the school the unit of change. Rather, Lambert maintains that we are naive if we believe schools can be units of change; she believes that only school districts can be units of change.

Fullan maintains that the concept of the school as the "unit of change" is one of the most misunderstood in the field of school improvement. He quotes Sirotnik (1987) as stating that schools should be conceptualized as "centers of change" and that people who work in schools need to be involved in their own improvement efforts (1991, p. 203).

The school as the unit of change is also discussed by Sergiovanni, who found that schools with more open climates and schools where changes are consistent with the schools' value systems as defined by shared purposes and beliefs are more likely to accept change (1991, p. 262).

The literature on educational change contains few accounts of principals who approached change as Duffy did, that is, by first insisting on consistent beliefs about children's learning by teachers, principal, and other staff. Mortimore & Sammons (1987) list "consistency among teachers in approach" as one of twelve factors most under the control of principals and teachers that distinguish effective elementary schools from less-effective ones (p. 7).

In a study of seventy-eight elementary schools in eight school districts, Rosenholtz (1989) as cited in Fullan (1991) found that two of the districts could be classified as having a high percentage of "moving" schools. They "explicitly cultivate and select principals whose foremost concern is student learning and who are skilled at the instructional leadership necessary for attending to continuous improvement" (p. 207). In those same two districts, "teacher selection followed from the goals of student learning and continuous improvement," and "teachers' opportunities to learn once on the job were built into school and system practices" (p. 208).

Maehr, Midgley, & Urdan (1992) make the link between school change and teachers' and principals' basic theoretical positions on learning. They argue, "It [school change] ought to relate to a view about the nature of students and learning and the purpose of schools" (p. 425).

The Calgary Board of Education recognizes the importance of consistency between principals' and teachers' beliefs about student learning and what actually happens in the classroom. In a brief report on their Assistant Principals' Leadership Development Program, La Rose writes:

> The "raison d'être" of schools is learning. It is therefore essential that school staffs engage in an ongoing dialogue on learning. That is, time needs to be spent examining personal beliefs and knowledge about learning, reaching consensus on what we in this school know and believe about the nature of learning, and then examining our teaching practices to determine the degree

> to which they reflect what we know and believe about learning. (1988, p. 5)

La Rose could be describing Wild Rose School -- a school in which consensus about the nature of children's learning formed the basis for all teaching practices. This structure was so powerful and all-pervading that it remained in place when Duffy left the school after three years to take another assignment.

What happens to an innovation when the initiator leaves the school? As early as 1978, Berman warned that "an implemented practice may be short-lived unless officials take appropriate actions to institutionalize it, i.e. to make the implemented practice part of the organization's standard operating procedures" (p. 177). Miles (1983, p. 14) asked, "What happens if the key advocate leaves? Without some sense of 'built-in-ness', the fate of innovations is in doubt." Sergiovanni (1991) and Fullan & Miles (1992) confirm that institutionalizing change is still of concern, and that it cannot be taken for granted.

The teachers who remained at Wild Rose School and the principal who took Duffy's place in 1986 maintain that the program continued as before. Libby, who was still on staff when interviewed in March, 1989, said, "It's all in place -- the program is in place. Nothing was dismantled when [new principal] went in. He believed in the philosophy."

This was confirmed by the new principal, who commented:

> As staff changes, we need to keep reaffirming our philosophy. From Day One there was a particular focus that is reflected in our hiring practices. Kids hear us use a common language,

> speak a common philosophy. Many people from outside the area want to place their children here. (Interview, March, 1989)

Several studies discuss the teacher's need for a sense of efficacy, success, and self-worth. In a summary of research on teacher empowerment, Erlandson & Bifano state that teachers' greatest desire is to participate in decisions of educational substance that directly affect their work. Such participation has a positive impact on their professional image, on their commitment to the mission of the school, and on their sense of efficacy (1987, p. 32). This is confirmed by Taylor, who conducted a study in 275 schools across the United States (1992), and by Sirotnik & Clark (1988).

Maehr, Midgley, & Urdan (1992) maintain that teachers also feel they have more investment in an organization when they have a voice in what happens to them, and when they feel their work is contributing significantly to a higher goal or purpose. They also point out what Duffy intuitively understood -- that teachers' awareness of classroom happenings surpasses that of the principal and the "experts," and that a wise principal will take advantage of this (p. 423).

There has been considerable research into what it is that principals do to effect change, and whom they involve in the process. There appears to be some agreement that the effective principal doesn't work alone (Dow & Whitehead, 1984; Hall & Guzman, 1984; Hord & Hall, 1987; Hord & Huling-Austin, 1986). Also, according to a longitudinal study in England, there is greater student achievement and teacher effectiveness when Deputy Heads (Assistant Principals) are actively involved with Heads (Principals) in program issues than when Heads act autonomously (Inner London Education Authority, 1985).

An unexpected finding of an extensive study by Hord & Hall (1987) was the discovery of the role of the Second Change Facilitator (SCF). Although the study was intended to focus on the role of principal, it also found that principals did not work alone. In some schools, the SCF was the assistant principal or a resource teacher. In others, the change process was facilitated by a team consisting of the principal, assistant principal, and another resource person. In some cases, a district consultant was the SCF.

Duffy employed the talents of several staff members in effecting teacher change and directing the focus of all on his vision for the school. His advisory council helped with administrative decisions; Rachel acted as the in-school curriculum consultant, while Libby focused on literacy and language across the curriculum from her vantage point in the library. All teachers were involved in making decisions about curricula and materials appropriate for their students; all teachers acted on committees with decision making responsibilities.

Hord & Hall (1987) also found that the principals fell into three general categories of leadership style: Initiators, Responders, and Managers, and that the role of the SCF was related to principal style. Principals who were Initiators had decisive, long-range goals that included the innovation, but went beyond. They had clear, definite expectations of how the school would operate and how the teachers would teach. Initiators worked closely with their assistant principals; they were good at delegation and appeared to share the responsibility for curriculum implementation with their assistants.

Responders allowed teachers or others to take the lead, and made decisions related more to immediate concerns than any long-range plans. These principals consistently relied on consultants or experts from outside the school to act as change facilitators. The third group, Managers, had excellent rapport with teachers and central office staff. They tended to protect their teachers from excessive demands. When central office wanted change, Managers worked along with their teachers to make it happen. They carried out what was imposed, but typically did not initiate change beyond that. The SCF for the Managers was always a person or group on staff.

Duffy initiated the vision and the structure for the school; certainly he had clear expectations for how the school would operate and how the teachers would teach. In order to implement his vision, Duffy called mainly on the assistance of his advisory council and on Rachel and Libby, as he had no assistant principal. However, all teachers were actively involved. Duffy appears to be an Initiator.

Miles, Saxl, & Lieberman (1988) maintain that the educational change agent should not be in a position of authority over the teachers, but should have a license to help. They describe teacher specialists who were assigned to individual schools specifically to bring in new ideas. The teacher specialists, who came from outside the school, had to develop entry skills and rapport to work successfully with the teachers. Since Duffy and his teachers relied mainly on their own expertise, they were able to bypass the difficulties encountered in having a specialist come into the school to work with teachers.

Duffy was also able to avoid a problem identified by Dow & Whitehead (1985) when principals appointed a key teacher from within the school to be responsible for curriculum implementation. Some principals then abdicated their leadership responsibilities, saying they didn't have sufficient training (p. 75). Duffy encouraged Rachel, his advisory council, and other individual teachers to take on leadership roles, at the same time maintaining the final decision making responsibility and authority of the principal.

The Rand Change Agent Study emphasizes the need for collaborative planning (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978, pp. 73-74). At Wild Rose School the teachers were expected to work collaboratively to implement Duffy's vision. In fact, the school organization was such that teachers were forced to collaborate with each other. The grades 1/2, 3/4, and 5/6 organization meant that teachers developed curriculum and decided on material as a team. The co-curricular program required co-operation and collaboration across the grades, and Duffy exerted pressure so that all teachers collaborated with Libby, the librarian.

Fullan (1993) comments, "There is a ceiling effect to how much we can learn if we keep to ourselves," and, "The ability to collaborate on both a small- and large-scale is becoming one of the core requisites of postmodern society" (p. 14). This is mentioned earlier by McLaughlin & Marsh (1978) who maintain that collaborative planning is necessary to both the short-term and long-term success of a planned change effort (p. 73).

As has been stated, the "raison d'être" of schools is student learning; therefore, it is important to examine student achievement in the light of the leadership provided by the principal. Krug (1992) reports an important advance in the ability of researchers to relate student commitment to instructional leadership. Using data on 10,000 students, Krug found that "principals' instructional leadership . . . appeared to explain as much as a fourth of the entire variance (and perhaps as much as 40 per cent of the predictable variance) in the commitment scores of a very large population of students" (p. 440).

The data, says Krug, suggested that "in the early school years as much as 25 per cent of the variance in student achievement can be attributed to effective school leadership and the learning climate that school leaders shape and nurture" (pp. 440-441). The achievement scores analyzed were in language arts and mathematics.

Wilson & Firestone provide an indication of how principals are able to accomplish this. They explain that principals can alter the work structure, thus freeing time for teacher planning and helping teachers focus on educating children (1987, p. 20). Leithwood & Montgomery (1986) confirm that effective principals attend to the quality of classroom instruction.

Krug reports that other studies (e.g. Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer, & Wisenbaker, 1979; Walberg, 1979) provide evidence that school climate is an important predictor of student learning even when the demographic factors with which school climate is correlated are held constant (1992, p. 440).

Wild Rose School students' achievement in writing and the school's writing program were recognized by the Board of Trustees during the winter of 1985 - 86. Duffy writes:

> At the School Board meeting on January 28 [1986] the Board will be dealing with the fact that the [district] students did not do very well on last year's provincial government writing assessment. To give suggestions to the Board, they have asked a few principals to be present to respond to questions. I have been asked to do this because our writing program is recognized as good. I would really appreciate any thoughts or ideas from any of you on this topic. What needs to be done in this system to improve children's writing? (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, January 20, 1986)

At the time of Duffy's principalship at Wild Rose School (1983 - 1986), there were no standardized tests mandated for use in the district; therefore, no district data are available.

Summary

This section related the main elements in Duffy's approach to change in Wild Rose School to the research and literature on the principal as change agent. In 1983, when Duffy began his principalship at Wild Rose School, there was very little literature on educational change available, and even less on the role of the principal in such change.

In one of the first comprehensive publications on educational change, Fullan (1982) states that "systematic research on what the principal actually does and its relationship to stability and change is (remarkably) only two or three years old -- and much of this research is still in progress" (p. 131). At that time, few principals were seen as change agents or even as instructional leaders in their schools. Principals were described mainly as being "in the middle" between the provincial education authorities, the school district bureaucracy, and the teachers. As such, their role was mainly imposing changes that came from above them in the line of authority onto the teachers, who were below them (pp. 140-146).

Duffy was a pioneer in developing his school as a unit of change and in encouraging his teachers to become their own experts. The methods that he used to develop their sense of efficacy and to ensure that they took ownership of his vision have been confirmed in recent research. Duffy's program was institutionalized; it remained in place for years after Duffy left the school. The need for institutionalizing change is well-documented in recent research.

There is, however, a paucity of research and literature on the approach that formed the foundation for all Duffy's work at Wild Rose School. Duffy insisted on consensus about the nature of children's learning. Further, he insisted that all programs, activities, materials, assessment, and reporting procedures reflect teachers' beliefs. It was recognized and respected that teachers differed in the approaches that they took to implementing their beliefs; however, the focus had to be on providing the best possible experiences for children. Duffy's energies and those of the teaching and nonteaching staff were also directed toward ensuring that children were always treated with dignity and respect.

Duffy and his teachers provided a model that is now emulated by others both inside and outside the school district.

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CHAPTER V

LANGUAGE AND LEARNING: THE POWER OF INFLUENCE

> *We learn by using language, by talking and by writing; learning is an act of creation which makes and shapes the world of the learner.*
>
> Torbe, in Barnes, Britton, & Torbe, 1986, pp. 136-137

Introduction

In this paper, I examine three aspects of language learning from two points of view. The three aspects are related. First, a philosophical position on the language learning of children and young people provides the foundation for programming, especially in the elementary grades. Second, an understanding of the role language plays in learning all subjects, that is, "language across the curriculum," forms part of an educator's philosophical position -- a very important part. Third, writing, one of the skills of language, provides a vehicle for teachers and principal to demonstrate what they believe.

I deal with these three aspects of language learning in two contexts. The first is Wild Rose School, where I examine the beliefs held by Duffy and his teachers and the application of their beliefs in the school writing program. The second context is the large school district in which Duffy and I were both employed. I examine the beliefs of our language arts team (six consultants and I, their supervisor) and the application of our beliefs at the district level.

Each topic is introduced, then developed from the two points of view. First, I examine the topic from the point of view of the work done by Duffy and his teachers at Wild Rose School. This is followed by an examination of the topic from the district perspective, that is, the work done by the language arts team.

The first purpose is to examine the relationship between beliefs and practice at Wild Rose School and our work at the district level.

The second purpose is to focus on the members of the language arts team as change agents in the district.

A Philosophical Position on Language and Learning

> *My experience . . . serves to underline the importance to teachers of a rationale, a theory that is consistent with and supportive of their practices. It provides us with a running code of operational principles, a way of monitoring our own practice, a way of effectively influencing other people and defending our own position.*
>
> Britton, 1982 b, p. 187

Introduction

Since 1978, our province has stated the fundamental principles related to the nature of language that provide the framework for the development of provincial language arts programs. The Program Rationale and Philosophy, Grades 1 - 12, appears in elementary, junior high, and senior high school language arts curriculum guides. The curriculum guides also provide, under each principle, some implications for the classroom, that are not listed here.

The fundamental principles are listed below:

1. A language arts program should emphasize lifelong applications of language arts skills.
2. Language use reflects the inter-relatedness of the processes of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing.
3. Language is used to communicate understandings, ideas, and feelings, to assist social and personal development and to mediate thought processes.
4. Language functions throughout the entire curriculum.
5. In the early years, the child's thinking and language ability develop in his own dialect.
6. In the high school years, more emphasis should be placed on the recognition of quality and flexibility in the use of language.
7. Language variation is an integral part of language use.
8. Experience and language are closely interwoven in all learning situations.
9. Language expansion occurs primarily through active involvement in language situations.
10. Through writing the student can learn to clarify thought, emotion, and experience, and to share ideas, emotions, and experiences with others.
11. Various mass media have their own characteristic ways of presenting ideas.

12. Literature is an integral part of language learning.
(Alberta Education, 1982, pp. 2-4)

These fundamental principles form the basis of a philosophical position on the nature of language and children's language learning. After discussing the principles, a school staff could use them as a basis for developing their school philosophical position. The next step would be to consider, very carefully, the implications of each principle for classroom and schoolwide programs; there are implications not only for the language arts program, but for every subject. The principles also provide a basis for discussing the school's programs with parents and community members.

In the following section, I first explain how Duffy and his staff dealt with the question of a philosophical position on children's language learning. This is followed by a discussion of the philosophical position of the language arts team.

Wild Rose School

Duffy required that the teachers in Wild Rose School hold consistent beliefs about children's learning. Further, he focused, and required that the teachers focus, on implementing these beliefs throughout the school. He believed, as Frank Smith did, "Children learn *exactly* what is demonstrated to them by their teachers" (1986, p. 199).

A statement declaring these beliefs about children's learning was developed by Duffy, his teachers, and secretary in November, 1983, three months after the school opened. All programs and activities in the classrooms and throughout the school were based on this philosophy. However, there is no document that specifically states the beliefs of Duffy and the staff about children's language learning and the role language plays in learning the content of the subject areas. Their beliefs were implicit in all their programming and activities, in their co-curricular program, and in the role the librarian and the library played in the programs and in children's learning.

In Wild Rose School, students were observed to be active users of language; that is, they spent their time speaking, listening, reading, and writing about topics of interest to them. Themes were used to integrate the skills of language and to facilitate the use of language, in all its forms, across the curriculum. Direct experiences were provided for the children. The teachers and Duffy were aware that, as Vygotsky so succinctly expresses it, "Practical experience also shows that direct teaching of concepts is impossible and fruitless" (1962, p. 83). Evaluation was based on children's use of language to demonstrate their expertise in subject areas. Children wrote to express feelings, opinions, ideas, and experiences as well as to clarify their thoughts. The teachers at Wild Rose School lived their philosophy of the language learning of children. They were also able to discuss what they believed with each other, with parents, and with visitors.

The teachers wrote an eight-page booklet, Language Arts Programming: A Child's Perspective, 1985 - 86. In this, they provide an overview of their language arts program and the function of the library. This is followed by a description of the program in kindergarten, grades 1/2, grades 3/4, and grades 5/6. The last page provides a discussion of evaluation. In short, they provide a description of how they were implementing their philosophy.

Consistency was maintained without a written belief statement about language learning since: (1) teachers were selected because they shared Duffy's basic beliefs about the nature of children's learning. (2) their beliefs about language learning were an extension of their basic beliefs about children's learning. (3) all teachers and Duffy had attended the language inservices provided by our language arts team and our external consultants. Since our beliefs about language learning were based on the same fundamental principles of learning that Duffy and his teachers held, their beliefs about language were basically consistent with ours. (4) they were able to use our philosophical position on language learning as their reference *(A Language Working Paper)*. (5) they distributed copies of our related brochure to the parents of all their students. (6) Rachel, a member of our team of consultants, was now on their staff, teaching and providing a consulting service.

There was a consistent philosophy of the language learning of children in place at Wild Rose School. The teachers and Duffy could articulate it to parents, to visitors, and to other teachers at inservices they provided. It was evident in all their programs and activities; they demonstrated their beliefs. It was implicit in their booklet and in the videotape they prepared on the grade 1/2 program, although it wasn't written down.

This kind of situation is explained further in one of the first publications to deal with the issue of a language policy:

> A language policy is not merely a document, though a document may form part of the total approach. Nor is it something which can be completed in a set time, and then finished with. It is a series of strategies, in the classroom and in the whole school, and a process of discussion, of asking questions, of finding answers to those questions. (*Language Across the Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools*, 1976, p. 10)

Language Arts Supervisor and Consultants

From 1978, when I was appointed Supervisor, Language Arts, K-12, until 1982, the language arts consultants and I worked from a consistent point of view about children's language learning that was implicit in every decision we made, but that was not written down. Our work was based on the fundamental principles related to the nature of language as listed in The Program Rationale and Philosophy, Grades 1 - 12, provided by the province. We related the provincial philosophy to recent literature and research on children's acquisition and use of language. Our beliefs were consistent with the provincial position and with the best and most recent research available.

What was lacking, though, was a document that we could hand to principals and teachers that stated, "This is what we in Language Arts Services believe."

I believed we needed such a document. Dennis Searle, on exchange with us from the provincial university, agreed to write it. After a great deal of discussion with the consultants and me about our beliefs, and drawing on his own experiences and his own beliefs, Searle drafted the document, A Language Working Paper, in 1982.

This ten-page document outlines the nature of language and the relation between language and thought. It examines the skills of language (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and discusses their integration. It looks at the role of language in learning across the subject areas, and also at the evaluation of the language arts program.

The document was presented and explained to the district's senior administrators. They agreed that *A Language Working Paper* was an appropriate document to use as the basis for our work with teachers and administrators. Workshops were held for school administrators at which the document was explained, with implications for schools and for classroom teaching. Our intent was to encourage school staffs to discuss their beliefs about children's language learning. They could then ensure that the role of language in the programs they developed was consistent with their stated beliefs. Their own document would provide guidelines for all their teaching.

Once our philosophical position was written down, we used it as a starting point for all our work with/for principals and teachers. It became the basis for our inservices and workshops. Whether the session was on reading, literature, spelling, writing, talk, or any other aspect of the language arts program, we could demonstrate where it fit into the total program. Having a stated philosophical position enabled us to look at the parts of the language arts program, and then fit them back into the whole. We were then able to discuss the integration of the skills of language, and their application across the subject areas.

Based on *A Language Working Paper*, we developed two brochures -- one for the elementary language arts program, and one for the secondary language arts program. These brochures highlight the aims of the language arts program, and explain, briefly, the components of the program. They touch on evaluation, language for learning throughout the curriculum, language and thinking, and end with a section on the home and the language arts program. Principals ordered brochures by the hundreds; most schools (including Wild Rose School) attached a copy to the first parent newsletter of the school year. School staffs were urged to use the brochure as a basis for discussion at staff meetings and at parent meetings.

As another service to schools, we provided a list of professional books, articles, and films/videos -- all based on our stated point of view about children's language learning. This material could be used at inservice sessions, and/or the school librarian could place it on the parent professional shelves. When the consultants and I had the opportunity to address school staffs and/or parent groups, we used the material we had developed to explain our position and as a basis for discussion.

The message that went forth from the language arts team was: (1) Our beliefs about the language learning of children are outlined in *A Language Working Paper*. (2) The language arts program outlined in our brochures is consistent with our beliefs about children's language learning. (3) All curricula and material used should be consistent, philosophically, with beliefs about children's language learning. (4) Evaluation and reporting procedures should be consistent with understanding and beliefs about children's language learning.

This message was interpreted by teachers and principals in various ways. Some, such as Wild Rose School staff, understood our stated philosophical position and believed in it. Our brochures, then, provided a practical application of their beliefs; our beliefs and materials supported the work they were doing in the school and with the parents. This provides an example of the influence we had hoped to have in the district's schools; that is, we provided leadership to school staff, and we also supported what they were trying to achieve.

The Role of Language in Learning: Language Across the Curriculum

> *The spirit of Language Across the Curriculum is that language is synonymous with learning and that language proficiency is attained by daily use in diverse situations, and in all subject contexts. In other words, the potential for language proficiency exists in every subject area of a school curriculum and the instructional use of language should be every teacher's responsibility.*
>
> A Guideline for School Language Policy, 1980
> (Toronto Board of Education)

Introduction

A point of view on the role language plays in learning across all subjects and programs in a school is part of a philosophical position on the language and learning of children. "Language functions throughout the entire curriculum" is one of the twelve fundamental principles that provide the framework for all language arts programs in the province.

The implications of this fundamental principle, that since language operates across the total curriculum the instructional use of language should be every teacher's responsibility, have been difficult for teachers to understand, and even more difficult for them to implement. Traditionally, language arts (or English) has been viewed as one of the four core subjects, along with mathematics, science, and social studies. In the elementary grades, where one teacher is in charge of all subjects, there were fewer difficulties. In the secondary schools, teachers were more likely to consider themselves teachers of subjects than teachers of children/students. Some teachers considered "language across the curriculum" a move to force them to take on the responsibilities of the Language Arts (English) teacher. The re-education of teachers has been slow and often painful, as it entails rethinking learning, how learning occurs in their subject, and the role of language and thought in this learning. The work is ongoing.

In this section I explain Duffy's beliefs about "language across the curriculum" and how the staff implemented their belief that, through language, children learned. To Duffy and his staff, language was not a subject to be studied, but a means of learning; students learned about language as they used it.

Following this, I explain how the language arts consultants and I worked at the district level with teachers and administrators from elementary and secondary schools on the role of language in all learning. We made an effort to effect change, and to influence school programs.

Wild Rose School

In the course of our first interview in the fall, 1988, Duffy made several statements about language and language arts. He was aware that one of the purposes of the interview was to discuss the language program at Wild Rose School from 1983 to 1986, and so he had given it some thought.

From the distance of several years and a new position, Duffy was able to say:

> I don't think I set out at Wild Rose School to make it a strong language school. As I look back through this [the paper Duffy wrote for teachers who applied to teach at the school] there isn't a great deal of emphasis on language or language arts -- but that's what came out. (Interview, October 18, 1988)

So much attention had been focused on their language program during the latter part of the three years of Duffy's principalship that he was aware it was a very strong program. Duffy was also saying that the emphasis on language emerged; it was not deliberately planned to be the school's focus.

Duffy also expressed some definite opinions about the role of language in learning based on the sum of his experiences as a student, teacher, consultant, and principal. He comments:

> Reading and writing, speaking and listening, are the essence of everything we do. I think we should ban the subject Language Arts in the schools. The learning of language I don't think is an end in itself. Perhaps in the sense that you want to enjoy fine literature and that kind of thing. But we are trying to develop tools. And so we talk about "language across the curriculum" and these kinds of things. And, of course, that's what we should be doing. (Interview, October 18, 1988)

> It wasn't just a "language" school. I am concerned that there is too much "language arts" being taught in schools. We had an excellent music program. The art teacher brought together ideas and resources for the entire staff, so we had art up the first year. Will got the computers going and Mac continued it from grade 3 to 6. Duncan led the co-curricular program. We had major school themes going all year round. Many of the teachers had an unbelievable background in literature. Our math program was strong. Our science program was "the pits" and our marks showed it. There were a lot of things happening in the school that were far beyond language, but they were all connected. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

Although Duffy struggled to explain the concept "language across the curriculum" to me and to himself, he was sure of several things. He didn't want a "language arts" block of time, with the teaching of the skills of language going on only at that time. Duffy wanted the teaching and practising of language skills to go on throughout the day, in the context of all the subject areas. This was consistent with his beliefs about children's learning.

Also, Duffy did not want direct teaching of language (grammar, phonics, sentence structure, vocabulary development, etc.) to be done as a subject or in isolation. Children were expected to use language to help them learn. For example, as they read and wrote about a topic in science, the teacher helped them learn the vocabulary and sentence structure specific to scientific material, at a level they could understand.

Duffy knew that "there were a lot of things happening in the school that were far beyond language, but they were all connected"

(Interview, November 8, 1988). They were connected because Duffy and his teachers shared similar beliefs about children and their learning. They were connected because Duffy focused, and insisted that the teachers focus, on providing the best possible learning experiences for children. They were also connected because there was a person in the school who had the theoretical background to explain the "connectedness" to teachers and to help them plan their programs, that is, to relate theory to practice.

The key person here was Rachel. Rachel brought with her a strong theoretical background in children's language development and the relationships among language, thought, and learning. As a consultant, she had been working with teachers for five years, helping them with their programs; now she wanted to put theory into practice herself. Rachel wanted to prove to herself and others that school programs could reflect what we know about children's learning. She was, of course, particularly interested in their language learning.

When Duffy used the term "language across the curriculum," he was discussing the role of language in learning in all subject areas, and in all formal and informal situations in Wild Rose School. All of the teachers contributed to this concept in their own way and according to their own strengths.

Influence of Organization on Program

The program at Wild Rose School and the emphasis on the role of language in learning emerged from the organization of students into multi-aged groups, and the requirement that the children in each group not be treated as two separate grades. This posed a real challenge for the four grade 1/2 teachers (a fifth teacher was added a few weeks into the school year).

The meeting of the four grade 1/2 teachers in May/June, 1983, had a purpose other than to introduce the teachers to each other. Books and other teaching materials must be ordered so they would be in the school when it opened in September.

It is very difficult to order appropriate books when you have neither planned your program nor met your students, yet the grade 1/2 teachers were able to do this with considerable success due to Rachel's experience and background. Even without a planned program, she knew that they would need a great many small books, both fiction and nonfiction, at different levels of difficulty. She also knew which publishers carried the books she preferred; as a consultant she had already evaluated all available material.

Evidence that the language program was not firmly established in anyone's mind is illustrated in the story of the books that were ordered, but never, or hardly ever, used. Just in case they might need a structured program to fall back on, the teachers selected teachers' guides and student textbooks at each level of grades 1 and 2 in the language arts series that Rachel considered to offer the best program.

Duffy concurred with the teachers' selection of books, both the small books and the textbooks. He trusted the teachers to make the best selection possible, since they were the ones who would develop the program and work with the children. Duffy comments:

> When we sat down together to order books, we ordered all kinds of literature and books. But we also bought a lot of textbooks -- series -- good ones, too. We bought them to fall back on. It was a big mistake, but we did it.
>
> I cannot say I had any idea how far removed from textbooks we would go with the language program in the school. I think I spent the first six months of that first year wondering when I would go into the grade 1/2 classrooms and see them using the textbooks -- and I never saw it happen. (Interview, November 8, 1988)

The connection between the organization of children into classes and the language approach used at Wild Rose School is explained further in *Early Childhood Services Program Highlights*. Duffy is quoted as saying:

> One of the things we have tried to accomplish with the combined classes is to make the educational transitions a child goes through in the first couple of years a bit more natural; we want each child to grow and learn according to that child's individual timetable. The language approach we use at Wild Rose School allows us to consider the needs and interests of EACH child instead of the expectations at a grade level. (Alberta Education, 1984, p. 2)

Themes, Units of Study, Co-Curricular Program

When the grade 1/2 teachers met in the fall, 1983, to plan their language arts programs, they decided that they could best meet the needs of individual students by focusing on themes. Their aim was to work with each student wherever he or she was on the "learning continuum."

Rachel, from her years of experience working with teachers, was convinced that the grade 1/2 teachers could reach their objectives by organizing their lessons around themes such as Apples, the first theme they developed. In an interview in February, 1994, Rachel explained that they reached a group decision quite easily. Although the other teachers had no experience with themes, they had just attended a summer session provided by Language Arts Services. The presenters, members of the CEL (Child-Centered Experience-Based Learning) group from Winnipeg, dealt with theme development in depth.

Rachel explained that they incorporated concepts and skills from the provincial social studies and science curricula. However, they also dealt with some of the concepts separately from the themes, if they could not be incorporated. Children also selected books of their own choice for reading, and wrote about topics that interested them. The teachers understood the importance of building on the children's intentions to learn to read and write, as well as using themes that were teacher-selected and developed (Interview, February 21, 1994).

Rachel's description of the way the grade 1/2 teachers planned so that children used language as a tool for learning across all subjects is confirmed in an in-depth study of her program and her students' learning (Iveson, 1988).

In planning a theme, various concepts are developed that cut across all subject areas. In their grade 1/2 study, Apples, students might look at what happens to an apple tree from blossom time in the spring until the fall, when the apples are ripe. This would involve thinking about the seasons, which would be part of their science curriculum. The children might sprout some seeds and discuss the life story of an apple. They could talk about ways that apples are used for food (cooked, raw, juice); they might even make and eat some applesauce.

The children could engage in crafts using apples, such as making shrunken-apple heads from dried apples. Teachers and librarian would have located songs and poetry about apples; there would be picture books, story books (Johnny Appleseed is popular), and nonfiction books.

Reading, writing, talking, and listening are integral parts of all activities and lessons in a theme. There is also a place for informal language lessons, as the need arises. For example, in the course of developing a theme, children's group stories are often printed on large sheets of chart paper. These stories are then read by the students. Teachers circle or underline letters or groups of letters to help children learn the sounds. Young children also learn all they need to know about capitalization and punctuation from the charted stories, and then transfer their knowledge to their own writing.

The children in grade 1/2 in Wild Rose School developed all their language skills in this way, using the theme material and other books they were interested in. So it happened that the textbooks the teachers ordered "just in case" were never needed.

The teachers of the older students used different approaches, according to the ages and abilities of the students. The grade 3 and grade 4 teachers (only two teachers the first year) preferred to team teach, and kept their students for two years. They were able to undertake projects that allowed the two age-groups to work together. Although their methods varied, all teachers were committed to developing language as a tool for learning.

Units of study developed by Libby and teachers of the older students were slightly different. Their topics were taken directly from the social studies, science, or literature curricula. A unit on "Electricity" could be used to develop concepts from the science curriculum, and also be extended to include other areas. Advanced students, interested in finding information to answer the question, "What is electricity?", could read about Benjamin Franklin's 1752 experiments with lightning and electricity. Other students might want to find early explanations of lightning in mythology. As students shared their findings, they would draw on skills of listening, questioning, speaking, summarizing, and evaluating; as a result, new skills would be learned.

The co-curricular program at Wild Rose School provided opportunities for students to practise and extend their language skills. Four times a year, a common theme was studied across the entire school. Each class worked with another class of older or younger students on this schoolwide project, adding another dimension to their language development. Students practised their language skills with unknown students of a different age-group, and with an unknown adult. ("Unknown" in this context refers to a person from outside the student's immediate environment.)

Co-curricular theme topics were general in nature, and of interest to students from kindergarten to grade 6. Duffy and the teachers interviewed maintain that, since the topics were not subject-specific (Nutrition, Citizenship, Mythology), students developed a broader view of the role of language in their learning.

There were also the three key people in the school who looked across the total school program. Duffy helped teachers make connections and stay focused on the children. Rachel, with her consulting background, her theoretical knowledge, and her experience teaching at several grade levels, was always available for consultation. In the library, Libby kept her eye on all the projects, helped teachers develop units of study, and promoted literacy.

To summarize, during the three years Duffy was principal of Wild Rose School, he considered language to be a tool for learning in all subjects and all activities, both inside and outside the classroom. This view of the role of language in learning was held by all the teachers, as well. Learning in the classrooms was facilitated by the use of themes or units of study, in which the skills of language were integrated with the content. Students learned about language by using it -- by reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

The co-curricular program, which involved students in learning activities with students and teachers from other classrooms, provided further opportunities for the application of language skills.

The program at Wild Rose School was the result of the confluence of several factors. One was Duffy's belief that children's learning would be facilitated by a multi-aged organization. Another factor was Duffy's decree that the students in each class not be treated as though they were in separate grades, which ruled out the traditional grade-related textbook approach. A third factor was the understanding of the role of language in learning that Duffy and his teachers brought to the situation.

The influence we in Language Arts Services exerted on teachers, including those who eventually became part of Wild Rose School staff, is described in the following section.

Language Arts Supervisor and Consultants

Introduction

In 1973, the provincial *Elementary Language Arts Handbook* (Interim Edition) contained the following:

> LANGUAGE GROWTH PATTERNS
>
> One of the major tasks of the school is to assist the child in moving from the intuitive grasp of language which he has when he enters grade one to rational control of language. Language growth in the elementary child usually proceeds along at least seven dimensions. To a certain extent this growth is age-related but it is primarily affected by the child's particular experiences and ability. The language growth patterns are:
>
> 1. Fluency in communication is a prerequisite to controlled communication.
> 2. Physical action precedes oral communication, which in turn develops before written expression.
> 3. Attention is often centred on specifics before arriving at generalizations, which in turn are appropriately applied.
> 4. Simple structures must be understood before complex structures.
> 5. Understanding of the concrete generally precedes an understanding of abstractions.

> 6. Growth takes place from one level to multi-level control of the receptive and expressive aspects of language.
> 7. The implicit language of the ego-centric child precedes the explicit language of the child who can recognize the communicative needs of others.
>
> (Alberta Education, 1973, p. 39)

These language growth patterns are based on patterns of children's general growth and development well-known to most teachers; therefore, the most reflective teachers recognized any inconsistency between their teaching practices and their knowledge about children's growth and development.

As a young teacher, Duffy realized that the phonics and grammar rules he had been teaching his grade 6 class made sense to him for the first time. He wondered if the rules made sense to his students.

The problem that Duffy recognized in the mid-1970's was compounded by some teachers' and administrators' lack of understanding that the skills of language supported each other.

Spelling and grammar were usually separated from the writing program; a relieving teacher was often assigned those portions. Creative Writing might be taught by still another teacher, often on a Friday afternoon when the children were tired and restless. While the separation of reading and literature was fairly common, occasionally reading was broken down still further. Different teachers could be teaching the same group of children "reading comprehension" and "reading skills."

There was evidence that having students at all levels discuss the concepts they were learning improved their understanding. This, in turn, had a positive effect on students' abilities to read and write about the concepts. Although this seems like a commonsense approach to students' learning, discussion was threatening to many teachers, who regarded it as loss of control. Their total experience had been that students listened while teachers talked; student talk consisted of formal presentations or answering the teacher's questions.

Another problem arose in the 1970's when elementary schools copied the subject-oriented timetabling of the junior and senior high schools, where students traditionally have a different teacher for each subject. It was customary for these teachers to deal only with the content of their subjects with the assumption that the students rotating through their classes had the necessary thinking and language skills to handle the content. When applied to the elementary grades, such an organization can negatively affect student learning. Especially in the elementary grades, it is important that a teacher have the same students for the total language arts program and at least the subject areas of science, social studies, and mathematics. This allows the teacher to help students learn and apply the skills of language in all those content areas. A hopeful sign of increased understanding of the role of language in learning is seen in the organization of some new junior high schools. Grade 7 students, and often grade 8 students as well, will have only one teacher for the core subjects of language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science.

In time, the fragmentation of the language arts program and the use of subject specialists was pushed down to the third grade; some eight-year-old children were faced with as many as four different teachers during the day. It was at this time that the voices of those who were investigating the role of language in children's learning began to be heard. These included Loban (1963, 1976); Moffett (1968); Britton (1970); and Halliday (1969, 1973, 1975). There was awareness of the need to change the way teachers were teaching and administrators were organizing language arts programs.

In the following section I explain how we in Language Arts Services reacted to that situation. First, we realized that change is made on an individual basis, one teacher at a time. As Fullan contends:

> It's individuals who are going to be the solution to education reforms, not systems. By focusing deeply on the individual, we'll be able to change systems along the way. (cited in O'Neil, 1994, p. 2)

The individuals concerned, the teachers and administrators, were at many different places in their understanding of the language learning of their students and the implications for the classroom. That meant we would be moving on a broken front. We were aware, too, that change is contagious -- teachers catch it from each other, as James Britton often reminded us. Teachers would learn from each other.

First, I discuss The Needs of Teachers and Administrators, followed by The Inservice Model that we developed and used to effect change.

The Needs of Teachers and Administrators

As the consultants and I attempted to influence the teaching of language in the school district, there were several challenges. Many teachers and administrators needed to reflect on what they knew and believed about children's learning, and be able to articulate those beliefs. They also needed to ensure that school and classroom organization, teaching strategies, the materials they used, and their assessment practices were consistent with their beliefs.

This was not a simple task. The young, enthusiastic teachers were more likely to come to teaching with a philosophical position on children's language learning. They had studied the research at university, and had made decisions about their own beliefs. If these young teachers were fortunate, they were placed in schools with supportive principals and like-minded teachers. If they were unfortunate, they were told to teach from a particular textbook and use workbooks, because that was the way teaching was done in that school. These teachers needed a great deal of support from those of us who provided assistance to teachers.

There was also a group of thoughtful, questioning teachers, usually with five-to-ten years' experience. These teachers were not satisfied with the way they were teaching. The inconsistencies between what they knew and observed about children's learning and the programs they were required to teach alarmed them. They knew that at least some of what they had been doing was not in children's best interests.

These teachers were confident enough to develop their own programs and articulate enough to explain what they were doing, and why they were doing it. Duffy had been this kind of teacher; the teachers he hired were in this category. These were the risk-takers. When we planned workshops, we drew from this group to help us work with other teachers. They had a great deal of credibility in the district; they were the teachers on the "cutting edge." These teachers, as well as some school administrators, were part of a ground swell of support for change in the teaching of language in the district. They were active participants in teacher support groups, and became models for those who were hesitant to change.

There were also many teachers who were so busy teaching that they had no time to reflect on their beliefs about children's learning; they simply implemented published programs, following the teachers' guides page by page. These teachers had no idea that authors and editors who develop textbooks, workbooks, and teachers' guides do so on the basis of their own beliefs about how children learn. Their beliefs are implicit in every exercise for students and every suggestion for teachers. Our task here was twofold. We must help teachers analyze the stated and unstated beliefs about children's learning in the materials they were using. We must also help these teachers examine their own beliefs, and relate them to appropriate activities and materials.

Then there were the extremely verbal teachers who could sit in the staff room and discuss their philosophies of teaching/learning at great length. What went on in their classrooms, though, was often quite another matter. I became acquainted with one such teacher when I was working with an elementary school staff, helping them develop their school's position on children's language learning. This particular teacher expounded at great length, making all the acceptable statements about children's learning, and how beliefs about learning should be reflected in classroom practice. As she spoke, I watched expressions of incredulity develop on the faces of her colleagues. Some actually had their mouths open in astonishment as they listened. When the teacher had finished speaking, one of her listeners exclaimed, "But that isn't what happens in your classroom!"

"I know it isn't," the teacher replied, quite unperturbed. "I didn't say I taught like that. I said that's the way we should be teaching."

There were also many teachers who were open to our suggestions and willing to change what they were doing, a little at a time. As well, we had to accept that there were teachers who would return to their classrooms, close the doors, and teach as they had always taught.

I was concerned, too, about the minimal understanding some of our school administrators had of children's language learning and the role language should be playing in all programs in their schools. These administrators were dealing with parent concerns, which in the elementary grades are very often related to some aspect of the language arts program. They needed a firm foundation. These administrators were also in a position to evaluate their teachers' performance, based on their observations in the classroom; they needed the skills to interpret the activities they observed. (Administrators who are unsure of these skills have been known to fragment the language arts program to accommodate the timetable, and to support programs that focus on behaviour more than on learning.) There were also many knowledgeable principals who attended inservice sessions with their teachers and spent a great deal of time in classrooms, watching and applying what they had learned. Duffy was one of these.

I believed that all administrators, and especially those in elementary schools, should be firm in their understanding of children's learning and the role language plays in that learning. I expressed my beliefs and concerns to an associate superintendent who was in charge of about thirty-five elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. He immediately asked if I would organize a series of half-day sessions for the administrators in his area, which I was happy to do. This associate superintendent mandated that his administrators attend the six sessions. Other associate superintendents then requested the sessions for their administrators. By the end of that school year (1983 - 84) almost all the school administrators had taken part in the inservice sessions on children's language learning, with implications for the classroom. Sessions for administrators were structured to take place once a month on a specific afternoon. However, administrators were also welcome to attend any or all of the workshops and inservices provided for teachers.

Teachers and administrators varied in their expertise, in their need for assistance, and in their openness to receiving assistance. Our strategies for dealing with the differences are explained below.

The Inservice Model

As we attempted to accommodate teachers' and administrators' needs and timetables, we provided: (1) workshops during the school day. This allowed principals to send teachers who would not otherwise attend. (2) series of sessions. This allowed for continuity and for practice between sessions. (3) repeat sessions, offered on different days and at different times. (4) Friday and Saturday workshops. The school paid for one day; the teacher provided the second day. (5) summer sessions. Teachers attended in-depth one-week or two-week sessions on their own time, when they were free of other responsibilities. (6) mini-conferences. Once a year, when we had well-known external consultants working in the district, we would plan a Friday evening/all day Saturday mini-conference. Although the visiting experts gave the speeches, workshops provided by our own teachers were every bit as popular and well-attended. This was another way of acknowledging the expertise of our own teachers.

We also made a deliberate effort to reinforce our message in as many ways as possible. We provided articles, both practical and theoretical, at our workshops. Besides providing something tangible for teachers and administrators to refer to, the articles also carried some authority if they were written by well-known experts. We even made it possible for teachers to buy copies of outside speakers' recent publications immediately after their presentations. This eliminated the time lag and possible loss of enthusiasm between hearing the speaker and receiving the book. Teachers were able to take immediate action, if they desired.

The external consultants/experts I invited to talk to and work with the districts' teachers and administrators brought with them the same point of view about children's language learning that we espoused. Their message was consistent with ours. Besides ensuring the consistency that we considered so important, external consultants also provided reinforcement. This was done in several ways. Our visitors generally stayed a few days, and provided assistance in various forms to several different audiences. One might be a large-group session in an auditorium, open to all teachers and administrators. Half-day or full-day workshops for teachers and administrators provided more depth. Some external consultants, such as James Britton, University of London, England, preferred to work with a small group of about twenty teachers, using a discussion format. Others, such as Donald Graves and Jane Hansen, both from the University of New Hampshire, liked to work directly with students. Teachers could observe the processes the visitors used with children, and discuss their observations with Graves and Hansen afterward. Where it was deemed appropriate, I arranged sessions for trustees and/or parents. The same message went to as wide an audience as possible, using as many different forms as were practical.

Repeat visits from the external consultants helped the teachers keep growing, and provided us with information on their progress. James Britton visited our district every year for eight years, with the length of his stays varying from five weeks to two days. Each time he came, Britton provided us with his observations and his assessment of the teachers' progress. Graves and Hansen also made repeat visits and provided valuable feedback to the teachers and to us. For six years, I arranged for the CEL (Child-Centered Experience-Based Learning) group of consultants, Winnipeg, to provide a week-long summer session and a two-day workshop during the school year. This group of principals and teachers tailored their sessions to meet our needs, providing both advanced workshops and beginners' sessions.

We moved ahead as we could, depending upon which group of teachers or which school staff we were working with at the time. Teachers varied in their understanding and expertise; we had to be flexible and willing to adapt. Even as we encouraged the teachers making a tentative move toward change, we also had to move ahead with the front-runners, as these were the teachers who would be in leadership positions in a few years.

As we implemented our long-term project aimed at effecting change, we impressed on teachers and administrators the importance of: (1) accounting for children's language growth patterns in all programs, (2) acknowledging in their teaching that integrating the skills of language facilitated children's learning, and (3) organizing so one teacher could assist a group of students to learn and apply the skills of language in literature and the other content areas of science, social studies, and mathematics.

Wild Rose School provides an excellent example of the programs we in Language Arts Services had been promoting for several years. The focus in the school was the result of several factors. Duffy had done considerable thinking about language, based on his experiences as a student and as a teacher. The teachers he selected had all been attending our inservice sessions and workshops for several years; in fact, one teacher was a former language arts consultant who had been providing many of the district's writing workshops. It is no coincidence, then, that our beliefs about the role of language in learning were reflected in Wild Rose School's programs.

The Writing Program

> *Until now, writing has occupied too narrow a place in school practice as compared to the enormous role that it plays in children's cultural development.*
>
> Vygotsky, 1978, p. 105

Introduction

For purposes of this study, I will focus specifically on the writing program at Wild Rose School and what we in Language Arts Services were doing to promote writing in the district's schools. There are several reasons for this focus. First, research on the processes that students engage in as they learn to write was quite recent at that time. In the United States, Murray (1982), Graves (1983), Emig (1983), and Calkins (1983, 1986) were leading the way. Because of our relationship with the United Kingdom, we in Canada had already been influenced by the research of Britton et al. (1975), working out of the Institute of Education, University of London. Prominent Canadian educators such as Smith (1982) were also contributing to the literature on writing. Individual school districts, including ours, were conducting their own research. The state of student writing appeared to be much the same across Canada -- the focus on writing in the schools was sorely needed.

Workshops for teachers were an important aspect of our emphasis on student writing. Most teachers had no university training specifically on teaching writing because it hadn't been available to them. The universities were reacting to the recent research on writing as they could; in the meantime, we in Language Arts Services provided workshops for our teachers on the teaching and assessment of student writing.

A further reason to focus on the writing program at Wild Rose School is that it was well-documented. Student growth and development in writing is visible to parents and teachers through dated samples of student writing. Student writing can be printed in parent newsletters and published for other students and adults to read. It can be posted in school halls and nearby malls. Writing can be saved; it becomes a permanent record of the child's development, as it did at Wild Rose School.

At the district level, two of our language arts consultants, one of whom was Rachel, had spent half their time with Student Assessment developing and administering tests of writing achievement in grades 5, 8, and 11. This project was ongoing from 1978 to 1983. Concerns about the state of writing in the district also resulted in an assessment of writing across the subject areas in 1982.

The concern about writing meant that it received a great deal of attention, at both the school and the district level.

Wild Rose School

Student Writing

On October 6, 1983, after Wild Rose School had been in operation one month, a newsletter was sent home to the parents. The entire front page of the newsletter comprised student comments about their month in school. Some of the children's responses are:

> I learned to write and I learned to hop.
>
> I like the gigantic 2 story library and the enormous gym.
>
> I like doing our autobiographies and coiling them.
>
> I hated the mud.
>
> I enjoyed the fun and we learned a lot together.
>
> I learned to write.
>
> I can read "Today is Monday."
>
> I like recess. Mrs. P. [kindergarten teacher] gives you a hug.
>
> I really liked the way we learned about apples.
>
> The rocking chair is nice if you get sad.
>
> (Wild Rose School Newsletter for Parents, October 6, 1983)

Although this is only a sample of the responses, the message that goes home to parents is clear. The students have the first word about their month in school; student responses are valued. This school is for children.

Parents also learn that the grade 1 students are learning to read and write, and that the grade 1/2 theme, Apples, is well under way. Parents learn that the grade 4 or grade 5 students have been talking about synonyms for "big," and that they love to use those new words (gigantic, enormous). Grade 6 student writing is already being published;

we learn this from the reference to writing their autobiographies and coiling (coil-binding) them.

From these few samples of students' responses, we can see that they are actively involved in their own learning, and that writing already plays an important part.

On Tuesday, November 22, 1983, less than three months after Wild Rose School opened, Duffy wrote in his weekly newsletter to teachers:

> I'd like to include some samples of [student] writing in our newsletter [to parents] on Friday, December 9. Please give me some pieces that your children have written that I could include. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, November 22, 1983)

Thereafter, all Wild Rose School Community Newsletters featured student writing from a variety of grade levels. They also included pictures of the student writers, which personalized the writing.

This action by Duffy gave several messages to the parents, teachers, and students. First, Duffy was saying that student writing was valued; writing was an important part of student learning. Second, Duffy was ensuring that student writing had an audience that went beyond the school to unknown adults and children. And third, Duffy's action was a clear demonstration of the purposes for student writing.

Writing can communicate a message (letter, list, report, invitation), tell a story, or be an expression of the students' thoughts and feelings (diary, journal). Implicit in the act of writing is the concept of audience, which includes the author writing only for himself/herself. For too many years a great deal of student writing had only one audience (the teacher) and only one purpose (to be marked by the teacher).

Very early in the first year that Wild Rose School was in operation, Duffy and his teachers took a stand on the importance and purposes of writing, and declared their position to the parents and community. From the time this school first opened its doors, the teachers had been encouraged to publish their students' writing in a form that could be read by a wider audience. Duffy writes:

> Binding Machine: We do have a great binding machine in the school. Will's kids used it for their autobiographies last week and it really finished them off nicely. We have a good supply of coils, so feel free to let your children publish their writing. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, October, 1984)

Publishing student writing was part of Duffy's and the teachers' agenda from the beginning. However, the idea of the school publishing house came from one teacher, Marlene, who undertook to organize it and also trained school aides and parents to operate it. Marlene's previous principal had been Ruth, a former language arts consultant and member of our team. It is not surprising, then, that Marlene would come to Wild Rose School with many ideas to promote students' language development.

Students definitely had a purpose for writing, and also for proofreading and editing their pieces of writing. Spelling correctly took on new importance, as did correct punctuation and capitalization.

Teachers continued to work with their students as they wrote and reworked their writing for publication. School aides and parent volunteers then took over the more mechanical tasks to ensure that the students' writing was published in as professional a form as possible.

Published pieces of writing were then placed in the library, to be borrowed and read by students, teachers, and other adults in an ever-widening audience.

The publishing of student writing at Wild Rose School is mentioned positively in an article about the school's programs in *Early Childhood Services Program Highlights*. The article mentions the school library, then continues with:

> . . . or, if you're looking for something with more of a local flavor, they [students] can turn to the four tiered bookshelf devoted to "Wild Rose School Authors." In this area, the cloth bound, hand printed volumes include such titles as "My Baby Book," a personal account of a youngster's formative years, as documented by the seven year old author, or "How to Catch a Hampster [sic]." According to the eight year old author, a piece of apple, some wood shavings and a large can will do the job admirably.
>
> These first publications and many others like them are the result of the heavy emphasis on language experiences that prevails throughout the school. (Alberta Education, 1984, p. 1)

During 1984 - 85, the second year Wild Rose School was in operation, the focus on writing expanded. The publishing house was soon in operation again, providing an incentive for children to polish their pieces of writing and make them available for the information and enjoyment of others. An added incentive in this second year was the prospect of their schoolwide sharing session, held on May 2, 1985.

In this sharing session, the students met in small, prearranged groups that included representatives from kindergarten to grade 6. Each group also had an adult member who acted as chairman -- a staff member, parent, or other interested adult. The students brought pieces of their published writing, which they took turns reading to the group, showing their illustrations, and eliciting comments and questions.

Through working in small groups with their teacher and classmates, the students had learned how to listen and receive another person's writing. They had learned to ask questions and to comment positively, at their own level of understanding; therefore, the schoolwide event provided the opportunity for each child to share his/her writing, to give consideration to others' comments, to be part of the audience, and to respond thoughtfully to other students' writing.

Children do not learn these skills by themselves or overnight; it takes the guidance of knowledgeable adults. Wild Rose School students received a valuable experience, and so did the parents who came to participate or to listen.

Duffy comments about the day in a newsletter that went home with every child:

> Our school-wide sharing of everyone's writing took place on Thursday, May 2. It was a real treat for children, parents and staff to hear the wide variety of writing being written and published in Wild Rose School.
> Thanks to Mrs. _____ [Rachel, former language arts consultant] and Mr. _______ [Mike, new teacher on staff] for their work on this project. (Wild Rose School Community Newsletter, May 10, 1985)

Rachel and Mike were both members of the first of several teacher support groups organized by teachers in our district to promote language learning. Their particular group organized and conducted the first Young Authors' Conference held in the district. All participants were indeed "young" authors. Two hundred children from grades 1 to 6 gathered on a Saturday to participate in this conference, planned just for them. Duffy reports:

> Young Authors' Conference On Saturday, May 4th about 15 of our students participated in a Young Authors' Conference held in the _____ ___ School District Centre for Education. Children were involved in a variety of workshops, such as Puppetry, Dramatizing Nursery Rhymes, Interviewing Skills and Editorial Writing. A highlight of the day was the sharing session when each of the young authors shared, with a small group, a piece of their writing. (Wild Rose School Community Newsletter, May 10, 1985)

There were students, teachers, and parents from about twenty schools at the conference. For all children involved, it was an exciting experience that broadened their concepts of "authorship" and "audience."

Young Authors' Conferences became recognized in the district as a very effective method of celebrating students' achievements in writing. They also provided an opportunity to involve and inform parents, community members, and central office staff, thus ever-widening the audience for student writing. These conferences also indicated to the students that both they and their work were valued by their families and teachers. The conferences were, indeed, celebrations of children as authors.

The next school year, 1985 - 86, those twenty teachers who had organized the first Young Authors' Conference took the idea back to their schools, and promoted it as a school project. Rachel, Mike, and other teachers were ardent supporters of children and their writing at Wild Rose School; that year their first school conference became a reality.

A Young Writers' Week, held April 21 - 25, 1986, provided an exciting culmination of the year's work in writing, and demonstrated the relationship among reading, writing stories, and storytelling. It was also a fitting climax to Duffy's three-year principalship at Wild Rose School, although neither Duffy nor the teachers knew that he would be leaving at the end of June.

During Young Writers' Week, Wild Rose School invited a local author of children's books to share his writing experiences with grade 4 to 6 students. On another day, a librarian from a neighboring school did some storytelling with all kindergarten to grade 3 children.

The school was open for parent and community visits one evening during the week. Students demonstrated some aspects of their writing programs. Some of the possibilities were: (1) a writers' workshop demonstration, (2) sharing writing as a class or in small groups, (3) a writing activity for parent and child to do together, and (4) demonstrating different forms of writing, from personal to reports (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter: Special Edition. YOUNG WRITERS' WEEK, n.d.).

A schoolwide display of student writing was open to the parents, students, and community for browsing during the full week. The display illustrated the many forms and purposes for writing; it also demonstrated the progression of children's writing from kindergarten to grade 6.

Young Writers' Week was a very ambitious project for the staff to undertake. Teachers provided a valuable service to the parents and the children by demonstrating the importance they placed on children's writing, and by viewing success in writing as a reason for celebration.

This overview of the writing program at Wild Rose School covers 1983 to 1986, the three years of Duffy's principalship. It recognizes that writing was an integral part of the students' language learning program -- from a modest beginning in the first year to their Young Writers' Week at the end of the third year. Along the way, young authors were always valued and their writing was treated with respect.

Teacher Inservice

Barth (1990) maintains that teachers in a learning community are not *inserviced.* "Instead they engage in continuous inquiry about teaching. They are researchers and students of teaching, who observe others teach, have others observe them, talk about teaching, and help other teachers. In short they are professionals" (p. 46). This is the spirit in which Wild Rose School staff set about to become skilled at helping children work through the writing process.

The teachers learned a great deal about writing from Rachel as well as from district workshops, conferences, and the literature on writing. At this time, progress was being made in uncovering knowledge about the processes children and adults use in writing; the number of articles and books on the subject increased monthly.

Duffy passed along many practical ideas about children's writing to the teachers, usually by attaching articles to his weekly newsletter. In one example, Duffy writes:

> Article (attached): "Using Journals to Encourage the Writing Processes of Second Graders." Another perspective on journal writing with ideas applicable to all ages. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, December 6, 1984)

Throughout the three years of Duffy's principalship, he encouraged his teachers to attend workshops and to inservice each other.

Inservice experiences intended to improve teachers' skills and result in better writing programs for children are discussed below in chronological order. This will allow us to examine any change in the kind, quantity, or focus over that period of time.

During the fall of 1983 - 84, the critical first year of the school, the staff's first task was to demonstrate to the parents and community what they believed about children and their learning. As has been noted, the staff demonstrated the importance of writing by featuring children's writing in community newsletters, binding and publishing their writing, and making it available for others to read through their school library.

During 1983 - 84, the first year Wild Rose School was in operation, Duffy and his teachers attended all the workshops on writing provided by Language Arts Services. They also took part in summer workshops during July and August, 1984, at Duffy's urging. Duffy's initiative in pushing his teachers ever further in improving their writing programs influenced the direction they took in the following two years.

The school year 1984 - 85 started early for Wild Rose School staff. As it had the first year, the staff met for a retreat at the end of August to have uninterrupted time to plan. At this retreat, held August 26 and 27, 1984, writing was "front and centre" from the first day. In preparation, teachers had been directed by Duffy as follows:

> Writing Session. We are all going to spend time writing about a personal professional success we had last year -- something you did in your position. Bring your journal if you kept one last year. (Letter from Duffy to staff, August 7, 1984)

For the first time, teacher writing was identified as an integral component of their writing program. This was only the beginning; writing workshops for the teachers were soon organized and continued throughout the school year.

At the retreat, the staff writing session was followed by a half-day workshop on children's writing development, led by Rachel. Objectives for the year were discussed:

> We will bring together writing samples from our own students to observe writing maturity. This could be done through a writing workshop to find out about children's writing at various ages and stages of development. Time Frame: one-half day at retreat in August '84. (Wild Rose School Objectives, 1984 - 85)

This workshop was continued at the school's professional development day about six weeks later. Duffy writes:

> Professional Development Day: Friday [October 12, 1984] is our P.D. day.
> 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. -- Evaluating Writing. Grade three to grade 6 teachers please bring your students' work from the memory piece they have [written] or will write. As well as any marking tools you need. Thank you to Rachel for once again sharing her talents and expertise. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, October 9, 1984)

Teachers were asked to have their students write about their memories of their first day at school in grade one. This provided a common task across the grades and allowed the teachers to follow the children's development more easily.

The new year brought further inservice opportunities. Duffy funded three teachers to attend the annual two-day CEL (Child-Centered Experience-Based Learning) conference in Winnipeg, February 14 and 15, 1985. Three of the six major speakers dealt specifically with writing, which gives an indication of the national interest in improving writing programs for children.

There was also a visit to the school by Monica Hughes, well-known author of children's literature. By listening to real authors talk about their writing, students become involved in the reading/writing cycle. They read the author's books with more insight, then return to their own writing with enthusiasm and increased understanding. An author's visit is also a learning experience for teachers, who gain insight into the writing processes of published authors, and are able to use this insight in their teaching.

Staff members indicated that the most intensive and beneficial inservice on writing was provided by Donald Graves and Jane Hansen, both from the University of New Hampshire. I had arranged for Graves and Hansen to spend a full week in our school district, June 17 - 21, 1985. Wild Rose School was one of sixteen schools that hosted one of the visitors for a half-day. Graves spent his time at Wild Rose School in two classrooms, working with children at whatever stage they were in their writing. The two teachers, as well as others who could be freed from their classrooms, observed Graves as he worked with the children and then discussed their observations with him.

These two teachers, along with the thirty teachers from the other fifteen schools involved, had intensive follow-up sessions led by Graves and Hansen twice during the week. There were also sharing sessions back at Wild Rose School. The combination of the week with Graves and Hansen and a more insightful reading of their publications had a positive impact on the school's writing program.

Nothing could match the excitement of having Dorothy Watson, University of Missouri/Columbia, at their school for a full day. Watson was well-known and respected in our district. Duffy comments on the day as follows:

> The visit to Wild Rose School last week by Dorothy Watson was a real highlight for many of us. It was very exciting showing her all the things each of you does so well with your children, and to be part of the enthusiasm she had for what we are doing. Two quick thoughts about her visit. We, like children, do well when we get praise from people who are important to us. Even though we believe what we are doing is good it really is nice to have someone else tell

> us. The other thought related to the talk that her visit caused in all of us. Everyone was involved in talking with fellow staff members about Language Arts -- I think this is very positive, and something we need to work into our days a bit more. (Wild Rose School Staff Newsletter, May 28, 1985)

Although Watson's visit was not related specifically to the writing component of the school's programs, writing was definitely an important part of the language programs she observed.

For Wild Rose School staff, 1985 - 86 was the year they consolidated their writing program. They had had considerable input from various experts, both local and external to the district. Now they needed to work hard to put everything together. They needed to provide more depth to already fine programs. This was a challenge in a school that was growing as quickly as theirs; enrolment had doubled since the school opened in 1983. Teachers worked diligently to provide the same quality programs and individual attention for twice as many students.

The staff continued their self-imposed professional development by working at improving their own writing skills and meeting regularly to share their writing. Again, sharing sessions were held early in the morning or after school. This is an indication of the serious attitude the teachers had to their responsibility to learn about the writing process through firsthand experience; in this way they could provide better assistance to students.

The winter months were spent implementing what the teachers had learned about children's writing. Children continued to write, edit, and polish their pieces of writing, which were then bound in the school publishing house. Plans were made for Young Writers' Week, April, 1986, which culminated their writing activities, helped children establish a firm relationship between reading and writing, and provided a demonstration for parents of the kind and quality of programs their children received.

In summary, Duffy and the teachers at Wild Rose School brought with them certain knowledge and expertise related to children's writing processes and appropriate programs. Once school was underway, Rachel was a direct influence on Duffy and the teachers. Rachel, who had five years experience working with teachers on their writing programs and on the assessment of writing, became the in-school authority on writing. The result was that, as a team, they were able to establish an excellent writing program and a publishing house for children's writing. By continuing their professional development, taking advantage of every inservice opportunity that was provided, and implementing what they learned, Wild Rose School staff provided outstanding writing experiences and programs for children. Children's writing was celebrated in the school and community.

In November, 1985, the quality of their language program was recognized internationally by the National Council of Teachers of English when Wild Rose School was named a Centre of Excellence in Language Arts. It was also recognized throughout the school district. In a staff newsletter, Duffy mentions having to attend a school board meeting where children's writing would be discussed. He says he was selected because of the outstanding writing program in the school (Wild Rose

School Staff Newsletter, January 28, 1986).

Language Arts Supervisor and Consultants

Introduction

As reported by Fillion (1979, pp. 52-57), a series of writing surveys in Toronto area schools in 1978 and 1979 suggest that students wrote very little in schools at that time, and that much of the writing they did required little original thinking or knowledge about the process of writing. For example, in one elementary school, grade 3 students produced 187 words per day. After eliminating the verbatim copying and simple information recall answers, there was very little that required the students to generate, select, and arrange information and ideas. In fact, the grade 3 students produced only 18 words per day of their own writing. The grade 1 students produced 10 words per day, and the grade 6 students, 32 words per day, on average. The picture at the secondary level (grades 9 to 12) revealed a similar pattern. Students surveyed wrote an average of 209 words per day, in and out of school. A third of this writing was verbatim copying, and only 16 per cent (33 words per day) revealed a writer actually manipulating the language and content rather than simply regurgitating or copying given information.

Frank McTeague, a language arts consultant with a Toronto area school district, comments:

> There is a discrepancy between the writing of students in secondary school and the writing of the adult environment. Hand copying written material is quite uncommon in the adult world,

> but it constitutes fully one-third of student work. Variety of function and audience is also characteristic of adult writing, but most student writing is directed to the mastery of content and the demonstration of such mastery to teachers. (*Features of a Writing for Learning Across the Curriculum Project*, 1980)

R. Jackson, a professor at the University of Alberta, conducted research in our district's junior high schools in the fall, 1981. Two hundred fifty-nine junior high school students participated in the study; these students were from grades 7, 8, and 9 in three schools. All of their writing in all subjects was collected for a week. Jackson then analyzed the data. The results were similar to the Toronto findings.

On average, the students in our study wrote 214.6 words each day (approximately one to one and one-half double spaced typewritten pages), slightly more than their counterparts in Ontario. The breakdown to discover the purpose and kinds of writing revealed the following information. Transcription (gathering information from other sources and writing it down) comprised 87.5 per cent of the writing, 7.1 per cent was direct copying, and 4.8 per cent was identified as Building Argument/Literary Expression. On average, then, only ten to eleven words per day comprised student-generated ideas.

The major purpose for writing at each grade level was to demonstrate the acquisition of information; the second purpose was to record (transcribe) information, followed by "express feelings" and "explain or explore." In each grade, over 90 per cent of the writing was directed to the teacher; in grade 8 that category reached 98.7 per cent.

A questionnaire asked teachers what factors were considered impediments to student development in writing. The greatest number of respondents pointed to lack of teacher preparation time and not enough emphasis on writing during teacher education. There was also support for more teacher inservice on writing. Teachers were surprised to discover how little students wrote, and the small proportion of the writing that was not teacher-directed (*Writing Across the Curriculum in the Junior High School*, 1982).

The same concern about the state of student writing was being expressed in Great Britain and the United States, as well as in other parts of Canada. Attention turned to the kind of writing programs students were receiving that could account for such dismal results. In Canada and the United States, there was also concern about reliance (and overreliance) on multiple-choice and short-answer tests. Students were not receiving a clear message that it is important to be able to express their thoughts/opinions/feelings in writing, and to be able to support and justify their ideas.

In an article about writing, Bissex (1982) makes the statement: "Writing is not just an end product awaiting correction and evaluation by the teacher; it is an evolutionary process that requires teacher involvement at every stage" (p. 74). The role of the teacher of writing had changed from teaching skills, assigning, and marking. The focus was now on the learner; teachers were expected to focus on helping students learn.

Our reaction to the state of writing in the district's schools was to provide leadership and assistance in various forms. We initiated workshops involving teachers, who demonstrated and discussed how they helped students with the writing process. We used videotapes, pictures, slides -- anything that would help get the message across. We also involved teachers in workshops on the assessment of student writing to help them find an alternative to red-pencil marking and letter grading.

External consultants comprised an important part of our plan. We invited well-known authorities on student writing to work with our teachers, students, administrators, and parents. It was important that the external consultants make repeat visits so they could observe progress. It also helped that they had all published books and articles on writing; it was important for teachers to have reference material in their hands.

Celebrating student writing was one aspect of the writing process that often involved groups of schools as well as individual schools, parents, and community members. Student writing was published, often in the school's publishing house, and then shared with other students and adults. Local authors were invited to talk to students and teachers. Young writers even had their own conferences on writing, complete with major speakers and workshop sessions.

Our initiatives and the activities initiated by teachers and supported by us are discussed in the next two sections -- Effecting Change in Writing Programs: Providing Leadership and Celebrating Student Writing.

Effecting Change in Writing Programs: Providing Leadership

The most basic change we were trying to effect in writing programs in the district was to have teachers work with students during the process of writing as well as looking at the finished product.

Traditionally, it was common for teachers to assign topics for student writing; the students then worked through the writing process by themselves or with the help of their parents. The writing was handed in to be marked by the teacher, often with a number or letter grade. Remarks such as "Good work" or "Lacks coherence" often did little to help the students understand what they did right or wrong, and how they could improve their writing. Of course, there were always some teachers who spent time with students as they wrote. Generally, though, writing was assigned and handed in to be marked.

The approach we in Language Arts Services took was that writing should be ongoing -- every day in every subject. Whenever it is possible, students should be able to select their own topics. They then proceed to gather their information, write down their ideas, and organize them.

Students often require assistance from the teacher or another adult at the point where they categorize and organize their ideas. Adults can help mainly by questioning the students and helping them clarify their thoughts. Donald Graves, who has spent many years working with teachers and students in classrooms, says he never physically touches or holds a piece of student writing at this point. He maintains that students must retain ownership of their writing and make their own decisions about the direction they want to go.

As their writing progresses, students will often sit with a group of four or five of their peers who take turns reading their pieces and getting student reaction. Students need considerable assistance before they become adept at listening to another's work and making helpful suggestions.

When the content and organization are satisfactory, students often need assistance with proofreading for the conventions of written English such as spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. This provides teachers with the opportunity to gather students together for a needed lesson on skills or to help a student add to his/her individual spelling list. Often students will work together and help each other at this point, or they could enlist the aid of an adult.

At last the piece of writing is in its final form, often complete with illustrations. Cause for celebration, indeed!

The assistance we in Language Arts Services provided to teachers took several forms (See FIGURE V--1). The consultants and I worked with teachers and administrators in their own schools and in district workshops. The workshops themselves took many forms. We were assisted in our work by the teacher support groups, many of whom focused on writing. We called upon these capable classroom teachers to assist with workshops; often they were asked to provide inservice for teachers in their own or a neighbouring school, as well.

A district assessment of writing had drawn attention to strengths and weaknesses. District achievement tests in writing were marked by our own teachers, which they said was the most valuable inservice they could receive. The experience provided teachers with insight into the writing of students from across the district; teachers also helped develop district standards.

FIGURE V--1

EFFECTING CHANGE IN WRITING PROGRAMS: PROVIDING LEADERSHIP

INSERVICE FOR TEACHERS/ ADMINISTRATORS

and
interaction
with

EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS

District Workshops
1978-1988
Elem., jr. high, sr. high
on writing process
and assessment of writing.
Ongoing in individual schools.

Teacher Support Groups
1981-1988, 200 members
inserviced own schools and
others. Now in positions of
influence in school district.

District Assessment of Writing
Gr. 5, 8, and 11, 1978-1983
Follow-up with school programs.

District Achievement Tests (L.A.)
Gr. 3, 6 and 9, 1986-1994
Teachers as markers for written
component. Valuable inservice.

Portfolio Collections
District Project, expands each
year, 1989 - ongoing. Collection
of students' written work
showing growth over time.

Dated Sample of Student Writing
Open-ended marking by teachers,
placed in student's permanent file,
can be used during discussion
with parents, teachers.
1994 - ongoing.

Dr. James Britton
1980-1988
Yearly visit. Worked with
teachers, school/central
administrators, parents. Mini-conference on writing, 1980.

Dr. Frank Smith 1981
3-day visit. Mini-conference.

Dr. Arthur Applebee 1982
3-day visit. Worked with
high school teachers.
Mini-conference.

Dr. Donald Graves
Dr. Jane Hansen
1985, 1987
1-week visits. Worked with
children in 30 schools,
and teachers/administrators
in small and large groups.

Dr. Jerome Harste
Dr. Dorothy Watson
1980 - 1985
Workshops for
teachers and principals.

Consultants on exchange from
local university:
Dr. Robert Jackson, 1980 - 81
Dr. Dennis Searle, 1981 - 82
Dr. Warren Wilde, 1982 - 83

External consultants who made repeat visits were able to provide feedback on progress being made across the district. Although we worked in a very large school district, Britton, Graves, and Hansen were able to document some growth in teacher and principal understanding of the role of writing in learning across all subject areas. Children became more articulate about what they were doing. Professors on exchange from the provincial university were able to spend extended periods of time with teachers and students and to provide valuable assistance and insights.

We continued our practice of working intensively with those teachers already involved in change, such as the members of the teacher support groups. These "front-runners" in turn influenced others. At the same time, we worked with principals and teachers as they initiated change in their schools.

Our team remained strong and cohesive, as Graves and Hansen remark in a letter written after their last visit to the district:

> Central Staff. We continue to be impressed by the staff working out of the Language Centre. The staff was strong before and certainly continues to be. They have obviously worked in classrooms with teachers, and kept up the courage of those who are venturing forth trying new things in writing and teaching. (June 19, 1987)

Teacher change in understanding the role of writing in learning and in implementing that understanding was slow. We understood that all teacher change takes time, in some cases seven to ten years (Fullan, 1991, p. 210). We continued to work with teachers where they were in their thinking, and encouraged them to help each other.

Celebrating Student Writing

The celebration of student writing across the district since the early 1970's has taken two forms -- publishing/displaying student writing and young writers' fairs and conferences (see FIGURE V--2). These are not mutually exclusive; books of published writing and displays of writing are often included as part of a young writers' conference.

Publishing student writing usually takes place within the school; many schools have their own publishing houses similar to that found in Wild Rose School. Collections of student writing are produced at individual schools; an anthology of writing could contain contributions from several schools. School newspapers and magazines are published at many sites, some on a regular basis. DinoWriters, a classroom magazine, is noteworthy because it has been published four times a year for the past eleven years by a grade 4 teacher, Dennis Windrim. The students write stories, poetry, biographies, descriptions, and interviews. They tell about their favourite sports, review children's movies and books, and provide their opinions on various topics. Over the four issues published during the year, it is possible to note the children's development as writers. Dennis enlists the volunteer assistance of many parents who edit, type, and help in many ways to produce this quality classroom magazine. The students in this classroom cover their entire writing curriculum by composing for the classroom magazine and by engaging in related activities. All writing is purposeful, not because it will be marked by the teacher, but because it will be read by others. DinoWriters is a model classroom newspaper.

FIGURE V--2

CELEBRATING STUDENT WRITING

DISPLAYING, PUBLISHING along with CONFERENCES, SHARING

DISPLAYING, PUBLISHING

Language Fair
1970 only.
Display 1 school - 1 week.

WOW (World of Writing)
1984 - ongoing.
15 schools, 4 weeks.
Displays - malls, central office.

Publishing Houses
Early 1980's - ongoing.
In-school. Student writing
published in individual booklets.

MAGPIE: A Magazine of
Literature for Children
1978 - ongoing.
4 issues per year.
Submissions of student writing
from across the district.
Subscription basis.

Collections of Writing
Individual schools.

DinoWriters - Magazine
1984 - ongoing.
4 issues per year.
1 teacher, gr. 4.

School Newspapers
Community/Parent Newsletters.

Anthologies
Ongoing.
Yearly publications.
Individual schools,
some junior/senior high schools.

CONFERENCES, SHARING

Language Day
Early 1980's - ongoing.
Individual schools, c.10 students,
1 adult sharing writing.

Young Writers' Week
1985 - ongoing.
Individual schools. Author
visits, sharing writing, parents
observing/taking part, displays.

Young Authors' Conference 1985
15 schools, 200 students, gr. 2-6.
One-day conference. Major
speaker (author). Workshops
for students. Fees.

High School Students'
Writing Conference 1986
13 schools, 125 students.
One-day conference. Major
speaker. Workshops for students.
Central organization. No fees.

3-2-1 WRITE 1987-1992
750 elem., jr./sr. high students.
One-day conference. Joint project of
public library, 2 school districts.
Anthology. Student fees. Sponsors.

LEADWORKS 1988 - ongoing.
Junior high. Teacher led.
1988 - 100 students - 1 day.
1995 - 500 students - 2 days.
Speakers. Workshops. Anthology.
Student fees. Commercial sponsor.

AUTHOR-IN-RESIDENCE
1990 - ongoing.
Trustee initiated. Board sponsored.

At the district level, there has been a project ongoing since 1978 in which children's writing and illustrations are published. MAGPIE: A Magazine of Literature for Children, was initiated as a research project by Glen Huser, at that time a classroom librarian. Glen, now a district consultant as well as an author and artist, invites children from across the district to submit writing and illustrations on various themes. Although it was once provided free of charge to schools, MAGPIE is now distributed on a subscription basis within the district and to other educational institutions and libraries. As far as I have been able to determine, MAGPIE is the only magazine comprised solely of children's writing and illustrations that is published commercially by a school district. MAGPIE sends a clear message from the school district to all who read it. The message is that we take children's writing seriously. We value children's writing, and believe that it deserves an audience beyond the classroom.

Language Arts Services sponsored MAGPIE for many years and members of our team acted on the editorial board.

As the quality of student writing improved across the district, it became more difficult for children to be published in MAGPIE. As a result, there have been several teacher-initiated spin-offs, all of which benefit students. One, the World of Writing (WOW), was organized in 1984 by teachers in fifteen elementary schools, and has continued since then on a yearly basis. This ongoing project involves setting up movable displays of children's writing in various shopping malls and in the atrium of the district's Centre for Education.

Conferences organized specifically for students were a phenomenon of the 1980's. The purpose was to provide students with access to authors, illustrators, cartoonists, playwrights, and editorial writers. A conference for elementary children (1985) organized by teachers, and a conference for high school students (1986) organized by a language arts consultant, were very successful. Due to the amount of work involved, though, they were not repeated.

Another conference, 3-2-1 WRITE, organized and supported by the public library and two school districts, provided a service to 750 grade 4 to grade 12 students every year for six years (1987 - 1992). It, too, was forced to discontinue, due to the demands of time on the organizers, who were all volunteers. I was involved with the original committee that established 3-2-1 WRITE; consultants represented the school district after I retired.

The legacy of 3-2-1 WRITE has been a number of spin-offs at the school level. Many schools held their own language fairs, where student writing could be displayed and/or published in anthologies. The result was that more teachers were involved at the individual school level, which benefited more students.

Bill Talbot, a language arts consultant who returned to teaching full-time, has been involved in organizing a yearly writing conference for junior high school students for the past seven years (1988 - 1995). Leadworks is ongoing, and now involves teachers from about twenty schools. The conference is attended by five hundred students every year. Planning and organizing, which begin early in the school year, involve committees of teachers and administrators working on the conference itself, on fund-raising, and on locating commercial sponsors.

The focus on writing in our district and in school districts across the country reflects a national concern for the amount and kind of writing expected of our students. We were not alone in expending time, money, and energy on the improvement of student writing. The activities at Wild Rose School in this regard exemplify what was happening in many schools in our district; the teachers attended our workshops, observed our external consultants work with student writers, and then applied their new understandings.

I have described the development of a philosophical position on children's language learning at both Wild Rose School and by the team of supervisor/consultants. Following through on one fundamental principle, "Language functions throughout the entire curriculum," I explained that Duffy and his teachers viewed language as a tool for learning; I also described how they organized their program on that basis. This is followed by a description of how we in Language Arts Services attempted to meet the needs of teachers as we promoted that fundamental principle.

Then, pursuing "writing," one of the skills of language, I described how writing was promoted at Wild Rose School. This was followed by an overview of the work the consultants and I were involved in at the district level.

Throughout, I have indicated the relationship between the philosophical position and the work in language learning that was ongoing at the school and across the district. In analyzing these three separate but related areas, I have identified the direct and indirect influence we had on teacher/principal beliefs about language, and related programs (See FIGURE V--3).

Supervisor and Consultants as Change Agents

In this section, I first explain the role of the consultants, then my role as their supervisor. Following this, I analyze the strategies we used as change agents in relation to recent research and literature on educational change.

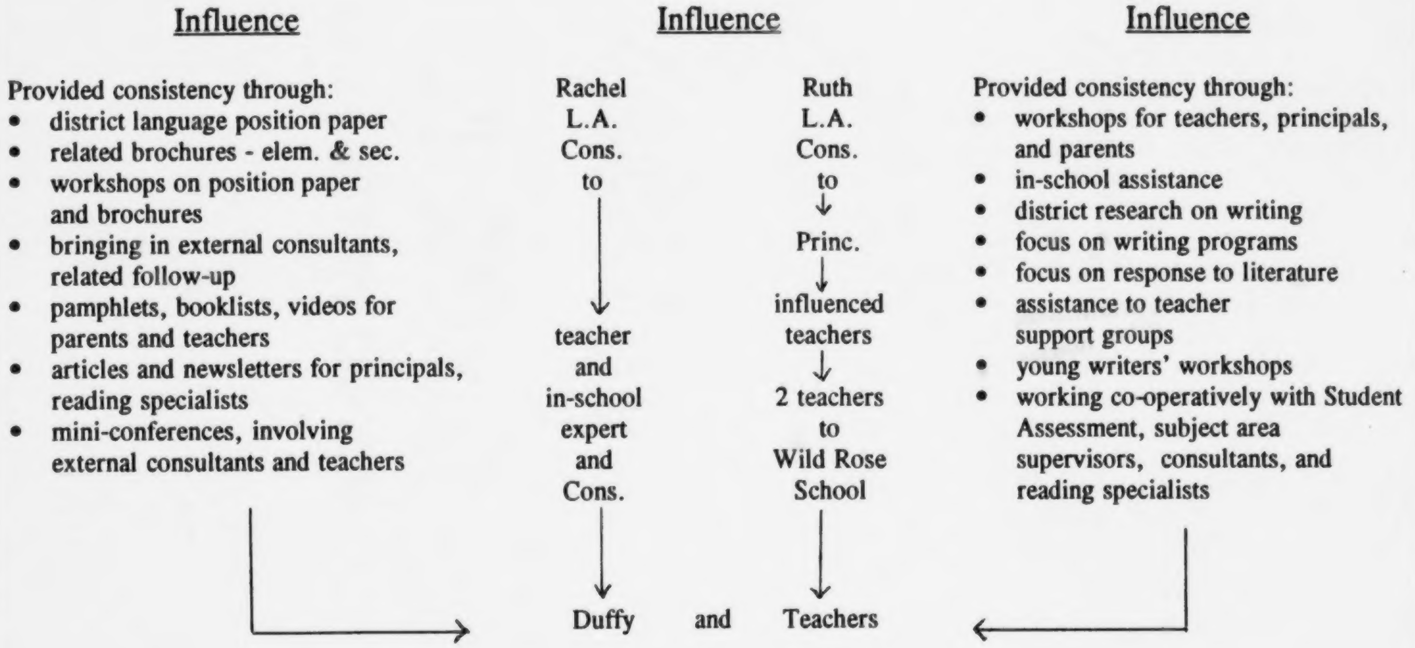
The Role of the Consultants and Supervisor

Just as Duffy carefully selected the teachers for his new school, I always carefully selected consultants according to their demonstrated beliefs about children's language learning. It was important that they be familiar with recent research on children's learning and development, and also the research on children's language learning. There were program implications for the integration of the skills of language and the application of these skills across all subject areas, often called "language across the curriculum." It was important that they have successful classroom experience, where they had demonstrated the ability to translate their beliefs into programs for students.

FIGURE V--3

INFLUENCE OF DISTRICT LANGUAGE ARTS INITIATIVES ON WILD ROSE SCHOOL STAFF, PRIOR TO/AFTER SCHOOL OPENING (September, 1983)

Language Arts Supervisor and Consultants



Influence

Provided consistency through:
- district language position paper
- related brochures - elem. & sec.
- workshops on position paper and brochures
- bringing in external consultants, related follow-up
- pamphlets, booklists, videos for parents and teachers
- articles and newsletters for principals, reading specialists
- mini-conferences, involving external consultants and teachers

Influence

Provided consistency through:
- workshops for teachers, principals, and parents
- in-school assistance
- district research on writing
- focus on writing programs
- focus on response to literature
- assistance to teacher support groups
- young writers' workshops
- working co-operatively with Student Assessment, subject area supervisors, consultants, and reading specialists

The continuing professional development of the consultants was an ongoing concern of mine; consultants must continue to be leaders in language learning. We continually updated the publications on our shelves, shared journal articles, and reported to each other what various experts were saying about language at conferences we attended. As well, every external consultant of note that I invited to work with the districts' teachers and administrators also had a session with our language arts team. This allowed us to discuss their presentations, get an outsider's perspective on the work we were doing, and question them about their latest research and thinking about language.

My aim was to ensure that we were working from a consistent philosophical position on children's language learning. The consultants and I had different backgrounds, experiences, and expertise. We welcomed both confirmation and challenges. We also wanted to provide as much flexibility as possible to teachers and administrators. We realized that they were at different places in their understanding of children's language learning, that teachers and administrators don't all learn in the same way, and that their students had varied backgrounds and abilities.

Besides their credentials as teachers, their knowledge about children's language learning and the implications for programs, consultants needed strong "people" skills. They must be able to manage themselves, that is, to take on responsibility, show flexibility and adaptability, and maintain a positive attitude. Consultants must also be able to work co-operatively with others, and to respect and value the thoughts and opinions of others.

The consultants' roles were tailored to demonstrate our beliefs. Elementary, junior high, and senior high school consultants planned and worked together; in the process they learned a great deal from each other. Some consultants spent half their time working in other subject areas (drama and social studies), or other departments (student assessment). This ensured that language was planned as an integral part of those subjects and that the position on learning implicit in district achievement tests of children's language was consistent with that espoused in district language programs (that is, that children's use of language be examined). One consultant always taught half-time, at his own request. His experiences in the classroom increased his credibility as a consultant, and also helped all of us stay in touch with the reality of teaching.

The work of the consultants fell into two categories, reactive and proactive. In reacting to requests from teachers and school administrators, consultants worked with teachers one-on-one, in small groups, or with the total staff. The consultants worked alone on some assignments; often they teamed with a colleague on a half-day workshop in a school.

The proactive role of the consultants was equally important. From their knowledge of students' learning, their understanding of district teachers' strengths and needs, and their knowledge of language programs, they could plan workshops that presented a variety of approaches to implementation. A team approach was often used in planning and presenting workshops; we also met regularly to review successes and problems, and to make needed adjustments.

In carrying out their proactive role, I expected the consultants to be self-starters. There was a great deal of trust involved in this, as they had considerable control over their activities. However, this was tempered by several factors. One was that our staff meetings were mainly sharing sessions, where the consultants discussed their plans and activities. A second factor was the regular one-on-one meeting I held with each consultant. Here they reviewed their goals and their work with me, then set new goals both for their own professional development and for their consulting role.

Over the ten years I was in the language arts supervisory position (1978 - 1988), I was the only constant. As some consultants left to pursue graduate studies, take administrative positions, or return to the classroom, new consultants were inducted into the team. The philosophy and purpose of the group remained intact. This consistency provided a strong foundation for all our work with teachers, school and central office administrators, and parents.

While the consultants (usually six) worked at the elementary, junior high, and/or senior high school levels, my role was to work and co-ordinate across all levels, ensuring continuity and consistency of philosophy and practice. Each of us met with one or two of the teacher support groups, after school or in the evening, to provide our support and resources. We could also arrange for the different group chairmen to meet together to plan and exchange ideas, thus reducing feelings of isolation. I also met with the senior high school English department heads once a month.

Our work with teachers and administrators formed the core of our roles. Besides the workshops and inservices previously described, the consultants organized sessions that featured specific teachers. When a teacher was identified as providing an outstanding program in some aspect of language arts, for example, literature or writing, that teacher was invited to make a presentation at one of our "Teacher Features." Other teachers welcomed the opportunity to hear and see what a colleague was doing in the classroom.

I organized regular supper meetings where teachers who had completed a master's/doctoral program or completed a year's sabbatical study could describe their work to their peers. The discussions over supper were invigorating for the teachers and rewarding for us.

It was important to me that as many of us as possible work on provincial Department of Education committees. This not only allowed us to provide input, but also to meet teachers and administrators from other centres, and learn from them.

I maintained liaison with the local provincial university, and for three years we exchanged staff members with their Faculty of Education. I was also in close touch with my counterparts in other cities, and worked with them, as well as with local teachers' convention committees, the local International Reading Association, and other groups to co-ordinate schedules and share expenses when a speaker with an international reputation was available. For three years I was a member of the Reading Commission of the National Council Teachers of English. The consultants and I made presentations at local, national, and international conferences. These activities enabled us to keep abreast of developments at all levels.

What I have been describing is a method of fulfilling our roles by networking. We supplemented our own expertise by drawing on that of colleagues at all levels and in various local, provincial, national, and international institutions. By doing this we were able to provide an up-to-date and comprehensive service to teachers, school and central office administrators, and parents. In our work with teachers, we drew upon the networking model. We supported and facilitated teachers' learning by providing our expertise and resources, as well as the expertise of the external consultants we brought into the district. We also facilitated teachers' learning by organizing sessions where they could share their own knowledge and expertise; that is, they could network among themselves.

Effecting Change Through Influence: Supervisor and Consultants as Change Agents.

In this section, I analyze the strategies the consultants and I used as change agents, and the factors that influenced our efforts. These are related to recent research and literature on educational change.

Time is always a factor in change. The time required for significant educational change to occur depends on the kind of change, the support it receives, and the readiness of the staff to accept it. The time required also varies with the complexity of the change and the number of schools involved. Fullan (1982) says we should "Expect significant change to take a minimum of two to three years" (p. 91).

Duffy, working from a strong philosophical position with teachers he selected to help him open a new school, was able to implement and institutionalize his program in three years. Most principals don't work under those conditions, and find that effecting significant change takes longer.

By 1991, Fullan had changed his position on the time factor and stated, "The total time frame from initiation to institutionalization is lengthy; even moderately complex changes take from three to five years, while major restructuring efforts can take five to ten years" (1991, p. 49).

The consultants and I worked in a large school district (80,000 students, 4,000 teachers, 200 schools) over a ten-year period, 1978 - 1988. Before that, I had spent the ten years from 1968 to 1978 as an elementary consultant, advising and assisting teachers and administrators; therefore, working at the district level was not new to me. I had developed an understanding of the various language programs I observed in the schools, and was becoming more firm in my own philosophical position on children's language learning. The experience of working with school and central office administrators, with members of the local university Faculty of Education and the provincial Department of Education, had added depth to our experiences. We believed we were offering a well-balanced, carefully considered service to the district.

By 1988, we were at the point where teachers and principals in many schools had taken ownership of the concepts we promoted. We could also say there was evidence that we had influenced teachers and administrators in schools that were recognized for the quality of their language arts programs.

I have traced the influence we had on the teachers and administrator, and thus on the programs, at one school. Wild Rose

School was named a Centre of Excellence in Language Arts by the National Council of Teachers of English in 1985. That same year, another of our elementary schools was recognized in the same "search for excellence." The principal of the second school was a former language arts consultant. These two schools were the only ones in western Canada to be recognized in this way. In 1987, after the second "search for excellence," three more of our elementary schools were named as Centres of Excellence in Language Arts.

This recognition of our schools is not insignificant; the schools' principals and teachers were always quick to acknowledge our influence on their learning and on their programs.

James Britton, internationally respected authority on children's language, visited our school district as external consultant for eight consecutive years from 1980 to 1988. Britton noted a difference in teacher and administrator attitude, understanding, and expertise in the area of the language learning of students, and reported on this growth in his reports to the Board of Trustees. He attributed the growth to our work.

Donald Graves and Jane Hansen, well-known and respected for their work on children's writing, spent a week in 1985 and again in 1987 working in schools with students and teachers. They wrote about the teacher growth in understanding and expertise over the two-year time span, and on our work with the teachers and administrators.

I should emphasize that the consultants and I were not working directly with children; we were working on behalf of children, trying to influence those who worked directly with children on their language learning. In such circumstances, your rewards come from the successes of those with whom you are working.

Smith and Orlosky (1974) studied educational changes over 75 years and found, "Changes in ways of teaching and organizing instruction are neither the result of legislation nor of social pressure, but rather are the outcome of professional wisdom and research" (p. 67). The kind of change we were promoting was actually one of the most difficult to effect, according to Smith & Orlosky. In their survey of the research on educational change, they found, "Efforts to change the curriculum by integrating or correlating the content, or by creating new category systems into which to organize the content, are made at great risk" (1974, p. 67).

We were asking teachers to rethink the role of language in learning, and to adjust the curriculum and their teaching strategies accordingly. This was, and is, very threatening to some teachers, especially secondary school teachers. Change takes place slowly in these circumstances. Fullan (1991) explains that "*change is a process, not an event*" (p. 49) and can "take up to 10 years in a given jurisdiction -- 10 years of doing the right things consistently and persistently" (p. 210).

In 1973 Britton wrote, "In general, teachers do not yet recognize the importance of language to the learning they are trying to secure" (1982 a, p. 181). Our aim was to help individual teachers recognize and increase their understanding, and, at the same time, help them as they adjusted their teaching to reflect their increased understanding. There was constant interplay between the theoretical and the practical.

This position is supported by Fullan's most recent statement on the subject to date. "It's individuals who are going to be the solution to education reform, not systems," and "change is not 'linear', or able to be mapped out in advance" (cited in O'Neil, 1994, p. 2).

Our efforts to help individual teachers and administrators involved varying the kind and number of sessions we provided to groups. It also involved reinforcing our message through providing external consultants, and through providing the books and articles of those considered to be experts in the area.

Our efforts also involved encouraging teachers to learn from each other, and facilitating that in every possible way. We worked with teacher support groups, invited teachers to present what they were doing along with us at workshops, and organized sessions for outstanding teachers to present at our Teacher Features. We also acknowledged teacher research and studies completed by arranging for teachers to discuss their work with other teachers or to write an article for publication.

Our analysis of teachers' needs is supported by Lortie (1975), whose study of what teachers do and think is described by Fullan (1991) as one of the most respected and widely quoted (p. 119). Lortie found that "teachers normally do not relate objectives to principles of instruction and learning outcomes of students" (Fullan, 1991, p. 120).

Fullan (1991) constantly emphasizes that change is a process. His position on teacher change also supports our approach. Fullan maintains:

> Change is a highly personal experience -- each and every one of the teachers who will be affected by change must have the opportunity to work through this experience in a way in which the rewards at least equal the cost. (p. 127)

The concept of encouraging learning through networking is one to which we subscribed, both for ourselves and for the teachers and administrators. By sharing our expertise, and by casting our "net" as broadly as we could, we were able to learn and grow in our understanding of children's language learning and the implications for teaching. Because we worked in a very large school district, and also because we understood that teachers learn best from each other, it was imperative that we facilitate that learning. We did that in several ways, as I have described.

Barth (1990) describes what I have called "networking" as teachers engaging in "continuous inquiry about teaching." He maintains:

> They [teachers] are researchers and students of teaching, who observe others teach, have others observe them, talk about teaching, and help other teachers. In short they are professionals. (p. 46)

Fullan (1991) also supports this concept, from his extensive review of research in educational change. He stresses the importance of teachers interacting with each other within the school. He also stresses the *"primacy of personal contact."*

Fullan (1991) explains:

> Teachers need to participate in skill training workshops, but they also need to have one-on-one and group opportunities to receive and give

> help and more simply to *converse* about the meaning of change. (p. 132)

James Britton had a very succinct way of expressing the same concept. He always told us that change was contagious, and that teachers caught it from each other.

There is a small body of literature on change through influence. This deals mainly with the role of the consultant assisting the principal and teachers to effect change within a school (Hall & Guzman, 1984; Hord & Hall, 1987; Hord & Huling-Austin, 1986; Miles, Saxl, & Lieberman, 1988). The consultants' role is reactive in most cases; that is, they react to a request for assistance that originated in the school. In a few cases, the consultants were sent into the school to bring in new ideas.

Fullan (1991) states:

> . . . we should like to know how effective district consultants are in introducing and responding to new ideas and, more important, in following through with new programs to support implementation and continuation. The truth of the matter is that very little is known specifically about the role of district support staff. (p. 216)

Fullan cites Hall, Putnam, & Hord (1985) as providing one of the few empirical studies of local change facilitators, and explains that there were problems sorting out the roles. One of their findings was that district-office personnel provide the impetus for, as well as being the source of, many innovations that are implemented in schools (1991, p. 217). Another finding was that district-office personnel do not have specialized training for their roles. It was in recognition of this fact that

I carefully established criteria for the selection of the language arts consultants, and then just as carefully attended to and supported their continuing professional development.

Fullan also cites a Canadian study (Ross & Reagan, 1990) in which the work of twelve consultants from two Ontario school boards was analyzed. The successful, experienced consultants arranged for a series of interactions with individuals and groups, networked with teams of consultants, and coordinated support between staff and line positions (1991, pp. 218-219). This describes some of the work that we did.

Fullan concludes that "the internal consultant, to be effective, must become a master of the change process, setting up a system of initiation and follow-through in working with teachers, administrators, and external resource people" (1991, p. 225).

Although all the consultants in the studies were in staff positions, it is not clear who was supervising their work, which I believe is a critical factor. If the supervisor is in a line position, directives come down that affect the work of the supervisor and the consultants. If the supervisor is in a staff position and working in a curriculum area, as I was, it is usually considered that the expertise lies within the team of supervisor/consultants. Certainly the supervisor is responsible to a central office administrator in a line position, and that is often a source of strong support, as it was in my case.

Literature on educational change originating at the district level contains no mention of curriculum supervisors in staff positions. Fullan reports that there were many problems sorting out the roles of "local change facilitators" (1991, p. 216), and I suspect that staff supervisors are included in that term. However, the term "facilitators" implies that the impetus for the change comes from elsewhere. Also, it does not acknowledge that someone is co-ordinating the work of the consultants and ensuring the consistency of philosophy and practice that was so important to our work.

Fullan concludes, "People at all levels of the educational system have power" (1991, p. 347), and suggests that if we are going to use that power, it would be better if we used it to do good.

The power that the consultants and I had was not derived from being in a line position, a position of authority. Our power came from our knowledge, experience, and expertise; it came from the consistency of our philosophical position on children's language learning and the programs that we believed reflected that position. Our power came from teachers', administrators', and parents' perceptions of our work, and their belief in what we were about. It was the power that came from influence.

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CHAPTER VI

DUFFY AS ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT: PROVIDING PRESSURE AND SUPPORT

> *My experience . . . serves to underline the importance to teachers [and principals] of a rationale, a theory that is consistent with and supportive of their practices. It provides us with a running code of operational principles, a way of monitoring our own practice, a way of effectively influencing other people and defending our own position.*
>
> Britton, 1982, p. 187

Introduction

Duffy was appointed as one of six associate superintendents of schools in 1986, at the age of thirty-six. In this role, he was responsible to the superintendent of schools for thirty elementary, junior high, and senior high schools, including an extensive continuing education department. Employed in one of the largest school districts in Canada -- about 80,000 students, 200 schools, and 4,000 teachers -- Duffy had risen quickly through the ranks from teacher to consultant, assistant principal, and principal, remaining no longer than three years in any one position. Along the way, he had also completed a Master of Education degree in Educational Administration.

Prior to this appointment, Duffy had opened a new elementary school where he remained as principal for three years. During that time, the school and staff were acclaimed for two reasons -- first, because the classes and the school were organized to accommodate children's learning; and second, because all staff focused on using language as a tool for learning across all subjects and activities inside and outside the classroom. In 1985, the school was recognized as a Centre of Excellence in Language Arts by the National Council of Teachers of English in a competition that included schools from across the United States and Canada.

To staff his new school, Duffy selected teachers whose beliefs about children's learning were basically consistent with his own. Visitors noticed that children were invariably treated with respect and dignity by Duffy and both the teaching and nonteaching staff. Throughout his three years as principal at that school, Duffy maintained the focus on children and their learning, and insisted that all staff members do the same.

Focus, consistency, and commitment were attributes of Duffy's leadership at the school. Attention to the professional development of teachers was a priority. Under his leadership, Duffy's teachers soon became their own experts, and the school became its own unit of professional development.

In this paper, I examine Duffy's leadership role in a new situation; he is now a leader of principals rather than a leader of teachers. He has not selected these principals; in fact, he has not even met some of them. I describe the decisions Duffy made and the actions he took related specifically to a three-year project he initiated with the principals. This is then related to change theory and to research. I also examine the reactions of the principals to Duffy's initiatives, and the dilemmas they faced in dealing with a change in leadership and in priorities, since they and their teachers had already developed their plans and established their priorities for the school year.

At that time, I was Supervisor, Language Arts, in the district with responsibilities from kindergarten to grade twelve. For some time my focus, and that of the consultants with whom I worked, had been helping and encouraging administrators and teachers to relate their practice to "a rationale, a theory that is consistent with and supportive of their practices" (Britton, 1982, p. 187). Our responsibility was to provide leadership, advice, and assistance; we could not require principals and teachers to follow our suggestions.

Duffy, who credits us and our external consultants with influencing his thinking, took our work one step further. He used the power of his position to mandate that principals and their teachers develop a school language philosophy, and that there be consistency between their theoretical position and their classroom practice.

Focus on Language: Applying Pressure

As Duffy considered what he should use as a unifying focus for his thirty schools, he knew he needed something that was important to all schools and to all teachers, no matter what their specialization. He had observed that some district schools were engaged in long-term staff development projects on the process of teaching, such as Effective Teaching and Learning Styles; others were concentrating on content areas such as science or mathematics. Duffy explained:

> I wanted to see if there was a way of pulling this together so we could look at good content and good teaching together. And I felt that I needed a medium to do it with. The one I chose was language, because I didn't see language as a subject area. I also think there's the whole issue that I think language is essential to everything else. (Interview, December 6, 1988)

Duffy understood that language and thought were critical to concept development in all subjects. Language was essential to students' success in all subjects and in all grades; therefore, language was every teacher's responsibility. Duffy decided that a focus on language would not interfere with any school's priority. In his first written message to his principals, Duffy introduced himself, explained his beliefs, and outlined his expectations of the principals. He stated his belief that "principals must be educational leaders first and building managers second." Although Duffy did not define "educational leader" at this time, he provided the following example:

> Underlying all learning in our schools from kindergarten to adult is the component of language. Language acquisition and development must be a consideration of all teaching and learning. Thinking and language go hand in hand. I believe that the principal has a very definite role in the promotion of language in each school.

Duffy continued by explaining his focus for 1986 - 87:

> My focus this year will be that of the Principal as a Leader. More specifically, The Principal as an Instructional Leader, and narrowed further The Principal as an Instructional Leader of

> Language. (Introduction of Duffy to Area North, August, 1986, pp. 2-5)

The focus translated into an assigned task for the year, as Duffy explained that he would like to turn his beliefs about language into a result statement for 1986 - 87. The result he was requiring was that each school would have in place by May 31, 1987, a written philosophical framework for the language learning occurring in that school.

However, in January, 1987, Duffy revealed to the principals that they were actually in the first year of a three-year project. In the second school year, 1987 - 88, Duffy required a plan outlining how each school staff would implement their philosophical position on children's language learning, that is, how they would translate theory into practice. During the third and final year, school staffs must demonstrate to Duffy's satisfaction that they were implementing their plans; school practices and programs must reflect their stated philosophy.

Duffy explained:

> EACH SCHOOL WILL HAVE IN PLACE BY MAY 31, 1988 A PLAN THAT DESCRIBES IN OPERATIONAL AND FUNCTIONAL TERMS THEIR SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY OF HOW LANGUAGE LEARNING OCCURS
>
> ******************
>
> During the 1986 - 87 year each school is developing a philosophical framework for the language learning occurring in their school. I see this as the "big ideas," the underlying system of beliefs you will together work from.
>
> In 1987 - 88 I would like each school to take this one step farther. What does this philosophy

> look like in everyday, operational terms? What type of school organization, materials, methods, staff, techniques, inservice are necessary to put this philosophy in place?
>
> I see 1988 - 89 as a year to implement throughout each school a program based upon the philosophical statement and the functional plan already developed. In many situations this may be happening now or next year. However, if we are going to make a significant difference that includes a total staff, it will take time. (Area North Priorities, January 7, 1987, p. 1)

Duffy was mandating a change in his thirty schools -- a change that would involve principals, teaching and nonteaching staff, and in some cases parents, for the next three years.

Mandated Change

There is at least one precedent in Canada for mandating the development of school language policies in a large school district. The Toronto Board of Education (1984) made the following requirement of their schools:

> . . . all Toronto schools will, by June, 1985, have formulated a Language Across the Curriculum policy for the school, and will be in the midst of detailed work on implementing that policy. (p. 1)

This mandate was made in response to a strongly worded recommendation from the Ontario Ministry of Education (1977), that stated:

> The effective principal provides the initiative for a school language policy and insists that all

> teachers be familiar with these Intermediate Guidelines, . . . that they understand the role that language plays in all areas of the curriculum, and that they recognize their role in language development in their particular subject fields. (p. 1)

The successes and difficulties encountered in implementing such a complex mandate across a large school district are discussed by Rutledge (1988), who was Associate Director of Education, Program, for the Toronto Board of Education at the time of the provincial mandate. He found "chronic difficulties in creating, sustaining and attempting to implement a consistent language policy." Since teachers must, in the end, implement the policy, they "must come to understand it and believe in it or they will not make the difficult efforts required to change classroom practice" (p. 220).

McKenzie (1986), in explaining her work with the Inner London Education Authority, England, discusses the six-week course provided to teachers who were assigned to reconsider language policies in their schools. The policies were being evaluated due to "the reorganization of a school, the appointment of a new head [principal] or language post holder [co-ordinator], the need to consider new materials and equipment, and teachers' encounter of provocative ideas in their professional reading" (p. 130). The author comments that, although individual teachers "do provide children with language and literacy programs in keeping with current language research, . . . the difficulties inherent in extending such ideas and behaviors to a greater number of teachers and schools are considerable" (p. 131).

It is unusual for someone in Duffy's position, that of a person in charge of one area out of six, to mandate a curricular requirement. Large school districts tend to have a superintendent in charge of curriculum for the district; any mandated changes would come from that person, and would affect the total district. Fullan, Anderson, & Newton (1986) describe a position in four Ontario school districts that was similar to Duffy's -- that of the assistant superintendent in charge of several schools, but responsible to a chief superintendent. In this study, the assistant superintendents carried out the mandate of a director [superintendent] of curriculum; they had no power to make their own curricular requirements of principals. In fact, I found no studies in which the assistant or associate superintendent had the power to make the curricular decisions that Duffy made.

Fullan (1991), Dean of Education, University of Toronto, who has studied and researched educational change for at least fifteen years, found that people resist mandated change. He explains:

> Mandates make people resist change. Leaving it to the school denies the benefits of coordinated support and problem solving. What does work is interactive pressure and support, initiative-taking, and empowerment through coordinated action based on individual realms of activity. Change should be a *negotiated* process. (p. 211)

Fullan (1982) also describes two phenomena related to change initiated by a superintendent. These are the need for the particular change, and the process used to deliver specific implementation support. Regarding the need for the change, Fullan maintains that there must be some assessment as to whether the innovation potentially addresses a priority.

Duffy did not conduct a needs assessment in the thirty schools in his area; he did not know which, if any, of his schools based their programs on a theory of language learning, implicit or explicit. However, Duffy did attend to the second part of Fullan's observation, that of the need for support for the principals. By initiating and supporting three years of inservice sessions, and by requiring each principal to have a professional growth plan, Duffy demonstrated his belief in the importance of the professional development of his principals.

Professional Development of Principals: Providing Support

Duffy comments on his awareness of the need to provide support for his principals:

> One of my concerns was, I don't think it's fair to hit people with a priority and then not give them help in doing it. I really didn't want to say, "This is how to write a philosophy statement"; on the other hand, I wanted them to have some background information to work from. (Interview, December 6, 1988)

The first background information Duffy wanted his principals to have was on the language development of children, the provincial philosophy and language curriculum, and the district perspective. Accordingly, he approached me during the summer of 1986 and asked me to arrange a series of sessions, similar to a university course. We decided on eight sessions, to be completed in December, 1986. These sessions were to provide the principals with sufficient background information so that they and their teachers could start developing their philosophical statements.

To make the presentations, I recruited several professors from the Faculty of Education at our local provincial university, some principals, and our own consultants. At each session, we addressed an important issue, such as The Role of Talk in the Classroom, and dealt with it at elementary, junior high, and senior high school. Since it is impossible to deal adequately with such a complex area as language in eight sessions, we tried to give the principals enough information to start on their philosophical statements. We also provided copies of articles that they could share with their teachers, as well as lists of books they could order for their professional shelves. Principals could also invite any member of our language arts team to their schools to help them and their teachers by providing further information or assisting with the process of developing the statements. Several principals asked for our assistance.

Most principals attended the inservice sessions, although attendance was not mandated; occasionally, a principal would send an assistant principal in his place. Duffy did not attend the inservice sessions, nor did he and I meet after each session to discuss the evaluations. The sessions did not build on each other; rather, each session addressed a different aspect of the same topic and was provided by a different presenter.

As the deadline for completion of the philosophical statements approached, Duffy asked me to plan two workshops at which the principals could discuss their progress and work on their statements.

Duffy worked with them, and took part in their discussions. The principals then completed their statements and submitted them to Duffy within the prescribed time frame.

The statements reflected the principals' and teachers' understanding, or lack of understanding, of what comprises a philosophical statement. Some statements were professionally written, using language that clearly stated the beliefs of the staff. Some were lists that described what the teachers were doing; others were a combination of beliefs and practices. All were accepted.

Reflecting on that time, Duffy comments, "After the first year I don't think there was a lot of staff commitment" (Interview, December 6, 1988).

Many principals and teachers were convinced that, once the statements were developed, they could be shelved and forgotten. Duffy's lack of attendance at the inservice sessions could have contributed to this belief. Another factor could have been that Duffy did not question the principals about their progress at his one-on-one meetings with them. They weren't able to shelve their statements, though; Duffy had other plans.

During the second year of Duffy's project, the principals, along with their teachers, were responsible for developing a plan to implement their philosophical statements. At first glance, it might not seem too difficult to build on the previous year's work. The problem is that, in a large school district, there are usually many changes from one year to the next; this year was no exception. Duffy was now responsible for thirty-one principals, twenty-three of whom had been in his area the previous year. Of the twenty-three continuing principals, three were in different schools, working with different staffs. This meant they were starting at the beginning, as were the eight principals who were new to Duffy's area.

This year, all principals were required to attend the workshops, which replaced Duffy's monthly meetings. The focus was on the process of working with staff to reach agreement on the plan to be submitted to Duffy. All workshops were conducted by two consultants, both of whom had extensive training and experience in English language arts as well as group processes. Duffy attended and took part in all sessions. The workshop leaders provided continuity by meeting with Duffy to evaluate each session and plan the next workshop.

The language arts consultants and I provided extra sessions for the eight new principals, as well as individual assistance at their schools, at their request. The new principals were also able to benefit from the experience of their colleagues.

As Duffy worked with his principals, he found that he came to know them better. He comments:

> I think we learned a bit more. I think people knew what they were doing -- they had a philosophy or they were developing a philosophy. They knew they were at the planning stage, and they were going to have to implement it [their plan] next year. (Interview, December 8, 1988)

During the summer of 1988, as Duffy prepared for the third and final year of his project, there was a major reorganization of the areas supervised by the associate superintendents. A seventh associate superintendent was added; several schools were moved out of Duffy's area, and new ones were added. Duffy was now responsible for twenty-eight schools and twenty-seven principals, since one principal supervised two schools. Only seven of the twenty-seven principals were from his original group and in the same school. Nine principals were new to the area; the remaining eleven principals had either joined Duffy along the way or had changed schools within the area. These changes affected the continuity of the project as well as the kind of inservice sessions that could be provided to meet the broad and varied needs of the principals.

As in the second year of his project, Duffy's priority was the professional development of his principals. Again, the principals' workshops replaced their monthly meetings with Duffy; therefore, attendance was compulsory. Duffy attended and participated in all sessions. This time, there were three workshop leaders who brought a variety of experience, training, and expertise. A former consultant returning from doctoral studies brought expertise in both language and social studies. A reading specialist and a consultant with several years' experience with a teacher effectiveness project completed the team.

The scope of the workshops and inservice sessions was wider than it had been the previous two years; this time both content and process were included. In an attempt to meet the needs of all principals, Duffy held extra workshops called Principal Collaboration Sessions where principals could choose from general topics such as The Change Process. Duffy, the principals, and the workshop leaders planned a full-day mini-conference with practical sessions that included The Assessment of Writing, and Drama in the Language Program. Besides this smorgasbord that was offered, there were workshops attended by all principals in which they addressed the application of district language outcomes to the subject areas, the relation between language and thought, and the assessment of language.

Principals chaired the planning sessions for these workshops, which were at times divided into elementary and secondary sessions in order to address specific concerns. Teachers and administrators from the seven schools in the implementation stage of Duffy's project made presentations explaining and describing their schools' approaches. Teachers and assistant principals often attended these sessions during the third year of Duffy's project, with or without their principals. Extra sessions on language were provided, at which attendance was optional. Duffy and the teacher effectiveness consultant, who also had a background in language, conducted workshops for assistant principals. The principals were moving toward becoming their own unit of professional development.

As an observer at the inservice sessions that year, I noticed that the principals who had been with Duffy for two or three years were helping the newcomers. One principal commented that he no longer went to the sessions just for himself; he felt a responsibility to help those who were starting out. As I visited their schools and discussed the project with the principals, I noticed that some were also providing assistance by telephone.

When the third year of the project was well under way, Duffy commented, "I think we have put front and centre the curriculum and instruction focus that we have had" (Interview, February 2, 1989). Duffy was cautiously optimistic about the way his project was going. He always believed that "there are some basic philosophical understandings that principals need to have." If they do not have those understandings, "you can give them all the skills and techniques, but that's not going to make any difference" (Interview, February 3, 1989).

Duffy continued the emphasis on the professional development of his principals during his fourth and last year as associate superintendent. Although the focus on language was no longer mandated and school staffs could select their own priorities, he noted that most schools continued to have one priority related to language.

Duffy's focus on the professional development of his principals was a key element of his project. There were between forty and forty-five principals involved in Duffy's project for varying lengths of time over the three years. Regardless of how long they were involved, all principals shared one thing -- they had all received intensive professional development on a regular basis.

The importance of the professional development of principals is supported in the literature on educational change. Fullan (1991) stresses that "principals must be continuous learners and through their leadership help create conditions for teachers to be learners" (p. 208). Barth (1990) recommends that professional development opportunities for principals be increased, and favours the "continuous personal and professional invigoration of principals" (pp. 66, 67). Duffy was the first associate superintendent in our district to place such a strong emphasis on the professional development of principals, and to use scheduled, mandated meeting time for that purpose. Since that time, other associate superintendents have followed suit.

Duffy's Principals as Instructional Leaders

Principals as Middle Managers

In a discussion of the principal and change, Fullan (1991) comments:

> Principals are middle managers. As such they face a classic organizational dilemma. Rapport with teachers is critical as is keeping supervisors happy. The endless supply of new policies, programs, and procedures ensures that the dilemma remains active. The expectation that principals should be leaders in the implementation of changes that they had no hand in developing and may not understand is especially troublesome. (p. 152)

Barth maintains that the concept of the principal as a "middle manager" comes from the 1950's view that "the principal is responsible for taking the plans of those outside the school and ensuring compliance by those within" (1990, p. 63). The role of the middle manager is precarious; he/she walks a tightrope much of the time. Sergiovanni (1991) makes the point, "Principals are responsible for monitoring this delicate balance by ensuring the mandates are sensibly interpreted and articulated into [appropriate] administrative, supervisory, and teaching practices" (p. 240).

Duffy's principals faced the classic dilemma described by Fullan. There had been no prior consultation; also, they must implement a mandated change they did not fully understand. In order to do this, they must ensure the co-operation and support of their teachers. They must also learn as much as possible about the language development of children, language programs, and the role language plays in learning all subjects.

Most principals attended the inservice sessions and workshops provided by Duffy with the express purpose of learning as much as possible. They wanted to be knowledgeable and informed so they could deal with teachers and parents from a firm foundation and fulfill Duffy's expectations accurately and within the specified time.

There were some principals, mainly in the elementary schools, who were already knowledgeable about children's language learning. Two of these principals were registered in graduate university courses in language or literature; some had been attending language arts workshops and encouraging their teachers to attend for at least five years. Some of the elementary and junior high principals had attended sessions that explained *A Language Working Paper*, which was the language arts team's philosophical position on language learning. None of these principals had reached the point where they and their teachers were writing a school language philosophy; however, a few principals and their staffs were working from an implicit philosophy of the language learning of children, as Duffy and his teachers had done in his most recent school. For these principals, turning an implicit philosophy into an explicit written statement was not difficult, since the teachers were already on-side.

For other elementary principals, and most junior and senior high school principals, the inservice sessions were an "eyeopener." These principals mentioned that what they learned about the need for a philosophy of language learning and about the role of language and thought was "a revelation." Others were able to see links they hadn't previously understood. Most principals agreed on the value of the inservice sessions in increasing their understanding of language and in helping them understand and work with teachers.

Working with Teachers

Ensuring the co-operation and support of their teachers was not an easy task for some principals. They drew upon resources that went beyond the information received and the skills learned at workshops. Principals who understood their teachers and who were skilled at interpersonal relations were most able to deal with teachers who felt threatened and frustrated. Some very good teachers in the elementary schools felt that, by mandating change, Duffy was criticizing what they were doing. At the junior and senior high school levels, teachers were often territorial. Talk of "language across the curriculum" resulted in language arts teachers being possessive about "their" subject, and other subject area teachers saying that language was being imposed on them. There was a high level of anxiety among many teachers; most principals worked with care and tact.

Techniques that Duffy's principals used to involve teachers in developing the philosophical statement and school plans varied according to the size and level of the school and according to the readiness of the teachers to be involved. Some small staffs met as one group with the principal; they worked it out together. Some principals met with a group of volunteer teachers, encouraging others to join them until all were involved. In some schools, the principal asked one teacher or a group of teachers to develop a draft and bring it back to the staff as a whole. In a few cases it was the principal, with teacher input, who wrote the philosophical statement; teachers were then required to add what they did in their subject area to implement the beliefs. Larger school staffs often used working groups, with a committee of teachers synthesizing the ideas.

Some principals involved only teachers; others involved nonteaching staff, and occasionally parents and students. The key element, though, was that the principal had to be involved. Principals who delegated their leadership and responsibility to an assistant principal, department head, or other person found that their teachers showed little or no enthusiasm. Teachers take their cues from their principals. This is confirmed by Fullan (1991) who found, "The principal has to become directly involved." When teachers have to plan what to do with a guideline, "[the principal] has to meet with them, he has to sit down with them, he's got to be familiar enough . . . that he can discuss it." On the other hand, "if the principal detaches himself from it, and that's what happens too often, then I don't think it [implementation of the guideline] will happen effectively" (p. 153). There were not many of these principals in Duffy's area, but there were some.

When it came to implementing their plans, some principals were able to develop projects; they then empowered their teachers by encouraging them to take ownership of the projects. For example, in one elementary/junior high school, teachers and students across all ten levels were involved in a study of global education. Teachers from this school then explained their project at one of the principals' inservice sessions. Several principals were intrigued to learn of the work of Vygotsky (1962) on language and thought. Following up on this, the principals were able to involve teachers in examining the language and concepts specific to the subject they were teaching -- whether it was mathematics, science, health, art, or any other. Several principals had ongoing writing, reading, or literature projects in their schools, which they were able to relate to Duffy's priority.

School Results

What effect did the focus on working from a philosophy of the language learning of children have on the results obtained in the schools? This is difficult to answer, since there were only seven principals still in their original schools in Duffy's area at the end of the three years. Besides the movement of schools and principals into and out of Duffy's area, there were always changes of teaching staff within the schools. Considering the larger picture, the schools were not assigned to the seven areas in order to provide comparability across areas. In fact, during the first year of his project, most of the inner city schools were in Duffy's area.

To complicate the matter further, for many years our Language Arts Services team and external consultants had been providing workshops on several aspects of oral and written language and on the need to work from a point of view about language. Our work continued during the years Duffy was an associate superintendent; some of Duffy's principals and their teachers attended regularly. Duffy built upon and furthered the work we were doing; we supported and assisted Duffy and his principals. It is not possible, therefore, to relate results to any one influence, although research tells us that if you focus teachers' attention on one aspect of their teaching and have them reflect on what they are doing, there will be change (Clark, 1988).

For these reasons, Duffy qualifies his comments on the test results of students in his area as follows:

> The kids in Area North who wrote [district language achievement tests in 1989] were above the district average in grades 6 and 9 and below the district average in grade 3. I don't even know what that means. It's a piece of information. (Interview, December 8, 1989)

Duffy did not try to identify growth across his area; he decided to look at what was happening within each school:

> I guess what I'm looking at is the growth within schools. There are more kids achieving the [district] benchmarks than there were three years ago. We have to look at those kinds of trends. (Interview, December 8, 1989)

Principals in Duffy's area examined district test results to determine improvement within their schools. One principal, who had been with Duffy's project for three years, spent some time reviewing his school's district assessment results in language with me. He related the results to the school's objectives in language learning, and described in detail how he and the teachers had worked to achieve such positive results in an inner city elementary school. Another principal of an inner city school, this time an elementary/junior high school, discussed results from the provincial grade 9 language test. The school's results were much above expectations -- many of the students had learned English as a second language. The principal attributed the results to the school's focus on language learning.

There were also results that are unquantifiable. A principal who was in Duffy's area for three years started a project that has continued for six years; it includes all junior high schools in his area and some from another area. This writing conference for junior high students started modestly, and now serves 500 students over two days. The amount and quality of writing done by students to qualify for the conference, and the excitement generated by spending a day with authors, playwrights, and illustrators cannot be translated into percentage points. These students are serious writers.

Duffy as Instructional Leader of Principals

Modelling

At the beginning of the third and final year of his project, Duffy listed ways in which he intended to demonstrate that he was an associate superintendent who was also an educational leader:

> WHAT AN ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT
> WHO PROVIDES LANGUAGE LEARNING
> LEADERSHIP DOES
>
> 1. He spends time in schools and classrooms observing children involved in experiences that develop language.
>
> 2. He discusses with each principal his observation of experiences children are receiving in the area of language learning.

3. He schedules time at regular principal meetings that focus in on philosophical, planning and implementation needs related to language learning.

4. He provides professional growth opportunities to principals to further develop their skills, knowledge and beliefs in the role of language in learning.

5. He makes principals accountable for their results in language arts specifically, measured by both achievement tests and other less formal measurement tools.

6. He will be able to provide specific examples and ideas of good language learning practice to principals as they develop philosophy and plans, or implement these.
(Area North Administration Plan, 1988 - 89)

By writing and distributing this statement, Duffy acknowledged his responsibility to provide for the professional development of his principals, and to monitor their work. He also pointed out that the principals are accountable to him for children's learning and for the nature of the experiences children receive. Implicit in these statements is the role of the teacher, who makes the decisions about what will or will not happen in the classroom. Teachers are not mentioned because they are accountable to their principals; the principals are responsible for supervising and monitoring the work of the teachers and for providing for their professional growth.

After Duffy had presented principals with the list of his responsibilities and they had all discussed the implications, the group turned to their workshop assignment for the day. This was:

> to be involved in a brainstorming session which identifies *What a Principal Who Provides Language Learning Leadership Does.* From this, each principal will identify a personal DOES list which will become the basis for Associate - Principal interaction, discussion and evaluation in 1988 - 89. (Area North Administration Plan, 1988 - 89)

Using Duffy's list as a model, principals were required to develop a general "principal" list, which they would then individualize. This would also involve the teachers, since Duffy would be observing students in classroom settings. Duffy comments:

> Each school will be asked to identify a list of five or six items, based upon their philosophy and plan which states *What Students Will Be Doing that Reflects our Language Learning Philosophy.* This will then become the basis for observation by the associate and perhaps the principal if he or she chooses to use it. (Area North Administration Plan, 1988 - 89)

Duffy clearly demonstrated that the purpose for his language learning priority was to affect children's classroom experiences. This approach is confirmed by Fullan (1991) who states, "Among other things, the administrator must require and help principals to work with teachers, which means that he or she, as district administrator, must have the ability and willingness to work closely with principals" (p. 212).

Reactions of Principals

As the principals developed their skills as educational leaders in their schools, they commented on and reacted to some aspects of Duffy's requirements. The content of the project -- the language development of children and the role of language in learning all subjects -- did not present a problem to the principals. Duffy's position on language was supported by the provincial Department of Education and by the district Language Arts Services team. Inservice sessions on aspects of the language program, such as writing in the subject areas, had been available and well-attended by teachers and principals for several years. In their schools, they were at various stages in implementing what they knew and believed. Duffy's focus on language was supportive of changes some principals were trying to make; therefore, they did not voice any objections to the content of Duffy's project. As one principal commented, "How could you be against language? It would be like being against motherhood!"

Although the principals had no problem with language as the content of Duffy's project, there were some aspects of the processes he used that presented varying degrees of difficulty. The directions given to principals for the way they were to proceed during the three years made some assumptions about change and about the way people learn. Duffy required that principals begin by determining their school's philosophy of the language learning of children; next, they were to plan how they would implement their philosophy, and then, in the third year, implement their plan. This is an over-simplification of an extremely complex process. Fullan (1991) is convinced that inservice education pertaining to an innovation should move "from the concrete to the abstract, from the practical procedures and activities to a discussion of underlying principles, rather than the other way around as is the more frequent order" (p. 132). In a recent interview, Fullan added that he has come to believe that people then move back and forth between concrete and abstract, as they accommodate the new learning (1991/1992, p. 4).

Actually, that is what most school staffs in Duffy's area did as they developed their philosophical statements. Teachers and principals discussed what they called "good practice in our schools," then decided what beliefs were reflected in their "good practices." In discussing their plans, they decided on the practices they could improve, how they would do it, and what that meant to their belief statements. In these schools, the philosophy was a working document that was constantly related to practice, and changed accordingly. The procedure as experienced by teachers and principals was cyclical.

During the first year of Duffy's project, the principals were frustrated because he hadn't provided them with enough structure. The process Duffy used was to require the development of a philosophy of the language learning of children in each school, and then provide a series of eight sessions on the language development of children and aspects of the language program in our district and province.

Duffy comments:

> I think one of the things that came up over and over again during the first year was -- they wanted me to give them a format for a philosophy statement, and I kept saying, "No," and that kept frustrating people. (Interview, December 6, 1988)

Principals said they didn't have enough information about Duffy's assignment to explain it to their teachers and gain their support and commitment. Several principals commented that, at a time when they really needed some structure, examples, and models, nothing was forthcoming. Duffy was a new associate superintendent; many principals hadn't met him before his appointment and had no idea what his expectations were. As a result, principals struggled for six or seven months without knowing exactly what Duffy wanted. At that time, two workshops were arranged, where Duffy sat down with his principals as they discussed their problems and worked on their statements. Principals were then able to complete their philosophical statements and submit them to Duffy.

Certainly the most controversial process Duffy used was to mandate the language priority and the three-year assignment. Principals have always had to deal with mandates from central office concerning organization, management, budget, assessment, reporting, etc., that often come to them through their associate superintendent. Mandates regarding curriculum and the approval of materials generally come from the provincial Department of Education. Duffy was the first associate superintendent to initiate a mandate that affected teachers' beliefs and the way these beliefs are reflected in classroom practice. Some teachers at all levels were upset by the mandate since it reached into the classroom, which they consider their territory. It also required them to relate theory to practice, a procedure foreign to many teachers.

Several principals were concerned that there had been no discussion, no needs assessment, and no negotiation regarding the priority, which was unexpected in a district in which resources and decision making were being transferred to the schools. The principals expected their associate superintendent to be a leader; they respected the authority he represented. They also expected that any changes he proposed would be negotiated.

On the other hand, some principals were not concerned that the language priority was mandated. In some elementary schools, it supported what they were already doing. By reflecting on their practices and developing their statements of philosophy, some principals and teachers said they became more focused. In some junior high schools, principals welcomed the support the mandate gave them to pressure reluctant teachers to change their practices. At both elementary and junior high school, some principals commented that they knew that was the right way to go, but they probably wouldn't have initiated it on their own.

And finally, a few principals and their teachers were convinced that Duffy's mandate was strictly a political move; if they waited a few years, he would be on his way. So they played the waiting game and continued to "do their own thing."

Duffy comments on his decision to take a strong leadership position and mandate the language priority, as follows:

> I still believe that my principals need to know what I stand for, where I'm coming from. Part of leadership is taking a stand and saying, "This is what I want to see happening," especially at the beginning.

> The other thing to think about is that I could have come on stronger. I believe in what I was doing at Wild Rose School, and I'd like to see a lot more schools doing it. What we were doing was based on great theory and good practice. (Interview, February 2, 1989)

From the above statements, Duffy could be described as a strong leader. Sarason (1972, p. 214) contends that it is exceedingly difficult for strong leaders to support other people's growth, because the leader must help others develop in *their* way. He continues:

> One of the most frequent complaints [of principals] is that they have little or no opportunity to experience the sense of autonomy, learning and growth. The tendency for a leader to give precedence to his needs and goals, to see them as identical with the success of the setting, adversely instead of positively affects the general welfare of the setting. (cited in Fullan, 1982, p. 164)

Berman & McLaughlin (1978) found that innovative programs were more likely to be implemented and continued if they met an agreed-upon need within the schools. This is confirmed by White (1990) who cites Emrick & Peterson, 1978; Loucks & Melle, 1980; and Vaughn et al., 1985, as agreeing that implementation is more likely to occur when relatively focused or specific needs are identified. In summary, White states, "The research is clear that successful implementation of an innovation will not occur unless it is perceived as meeting a specific need in the organization, whether identified during the adoption stage or at some time during implementation" (p. 210).

In a cautionary note, Huberman & Miles (1984) suggest that the need to change may not be evident at the beginning to those required to implement a new program, but may be developed as people become more familiar with the program and the change process. In the same vein, Fullan (1982) cautions against exhausting people's energies before the project gets started, and states that, "the leader must establish credibility early in the change process" (p. 164).

Duffy made his move early. He decided himself what the area's priority should be and how principals should implement it. He comments:

> Did I give enough consideration to having the principals buy into it? Number two -- did I give enough long term direction? and number three, did we give them enough help and strategies to involve them with their staffs? And no, we didn't do all of those things, but we did get some philosophy statements. (Interview, December 6, 1988)

The question is, how much structure and assistance should be provided to those expected to implement change?

As he reflected on his years of leadership as an associate superintendent, Duffy related that he had had two purposes. The first was to have each school staff reach the point where all practices reflected a stated philosophy about the language learning of children. In Duffy's words "The ultimate is that there is consistency [of philosophy and practice] in that building" (Interview, October 18, 1988). Duffy did not say that there should be consistency across all schools in his area, or that each school's philosophy should be congruent with his -- just that the principal and teachers in each school should be working from a philosophy that they could articulate and implement.

Duffy's second purpose was to have principals become educational leaders in their own schools. As principals increased their knowledge and developed skills through attendance at workshops, through reading, and through working with teachers and parents on the language project, their abilities as leaders would increase. They would then be able to establish their own priorities and manage their own professional development.

The professional development of Duffy's principals was critical to the success of his project. The sessions changed as the principals developed leadership skills until, during the last year, principals were planning and organizing workshops and a mini-conference. Those who had been in the project the longest took a leadership role in bringing new members into the group. Fullan (1991) confirms that this is an important aspect of change in schools, where changeover of personnel is ongoing and could cause a project to lose momentum (p. 200).

Observers at the workshops commented that the group was dynamic; there was the feeling that they were on the "cutting edge" and were receiving valuable opportunities. While it is not possible to gauge the effects of the project upon those who were in it only a short time, some principals who were long-term participants report that they were "profoundly affected" by the realization that they and their teachers should be working from a philosophy of children's learning. That, and the experience of having to work this out at the school level, contributed to their ability to provide educational leadership wherever they were placed within the district. Many of the participants are still principals in the district; two are now associate superintendents, each in charge of over thirty schools.

Concern for the educational leadership role of principals in general is expressed by John Goodlad, who has spent a lifetime working in schools and with principals, and has written extensively on the subject. In an excerpt from an unpublished paper, Goodlad (1988) states:

> One need only study the preparation programs of school administrators to see how preoccupation with what works and neglect of central educational issues extends upward into the professional orientation of superintendents. And, in spite of recent exhortations regarding the central role of the principal in school improvement, the emphasis in training programs, both pre-service and in-service, is on process, not the substance of schooling. . . . Administrators like to be referred to as leaders but they often are hopelessly caught up in the values and routines of management. Many tell me that they have little or no discretionary time and such discretionary time as is available goes to things other than reading and thinking about the enterprise which is their life's work. (p. 24)

However one views the processes that Duffy used in working with his principals, he did provide a focus on educational leadership, on the curriculum, and on children's learning that was sorely needed in a district whose focus was on management.

Reflections

In an interview in the spring, 1995, and from the vantage point of nine more years of maturity and experience, Duffy commented on his role as an associate superintendent and on his three-year project. At the time of that appointment, Duffy was thirty-six years old. He had come directly from "a school experience that was possibly the richest form of professional growth one can ever hope for in a career" (Interview, March 12, 1995). From this experience, Duffy brought to his new assignment his commitment to children and their learning, his sense of mission, and his ability to focus -- to envision all the parts of an extensive project and how they would fit together. Duffy also brought an understanding of the need for the ongoing professional development of his principals; he committed time and funds to helping them become a confident, cohesive group that could take responsibility for their own professional development.

Duffy was a risk-taker as a principal; he continued to be a risk-taker as an associate superintendent. He deliberately focused on an area of the curriculum -- language -- and on children's language learning. As Duffy explains, "The direction of looking at language learning was not only bold but quite unorthodox at the time" (Interview, March 12, 1995). The "time" to which Duffy refers is a particular period in the history of the district. One principal describes it as a time that did not provide a nurturing environment for leaders committed to children's learning. Duffy was such a leader, both as a principal and as a leader of principals.

Duffy reflected on the processes that he had used in working with his principals nine years previously, and decided that he would use some of them again. His processes had left room for principals to grow and to design their own plans. Although some principals appreciated the flexibility Duffy provided, others felt insecure with the lack of structure.

Leaders must concentrate on helping their followers develop the confidence to move ahead on their own. There is no "one way" to do this.

The one process that Duffy decided he would not use another time is mandating the direction for his principals to take. Duffy's current reading and his experiences in the last nine years have convinced him that he would now form partnerships and work with the principals in deciding the direction of their growth and development. He states, "My current age and experience would tell me the importance of listening, negotiating, pressuring, and challenging" (Interview, March 12, 1995).

As a principal, Duffy was a pioneer in having teachers take on ownership of a vision that never wavered in its focus on children and their learning. As an associate superintendent, Duffy again led the way by insisting that his principals focus on children's learning, by being an advocate for an understanding of the role of language in learning, and by providing for the ongoing professional development of principals.

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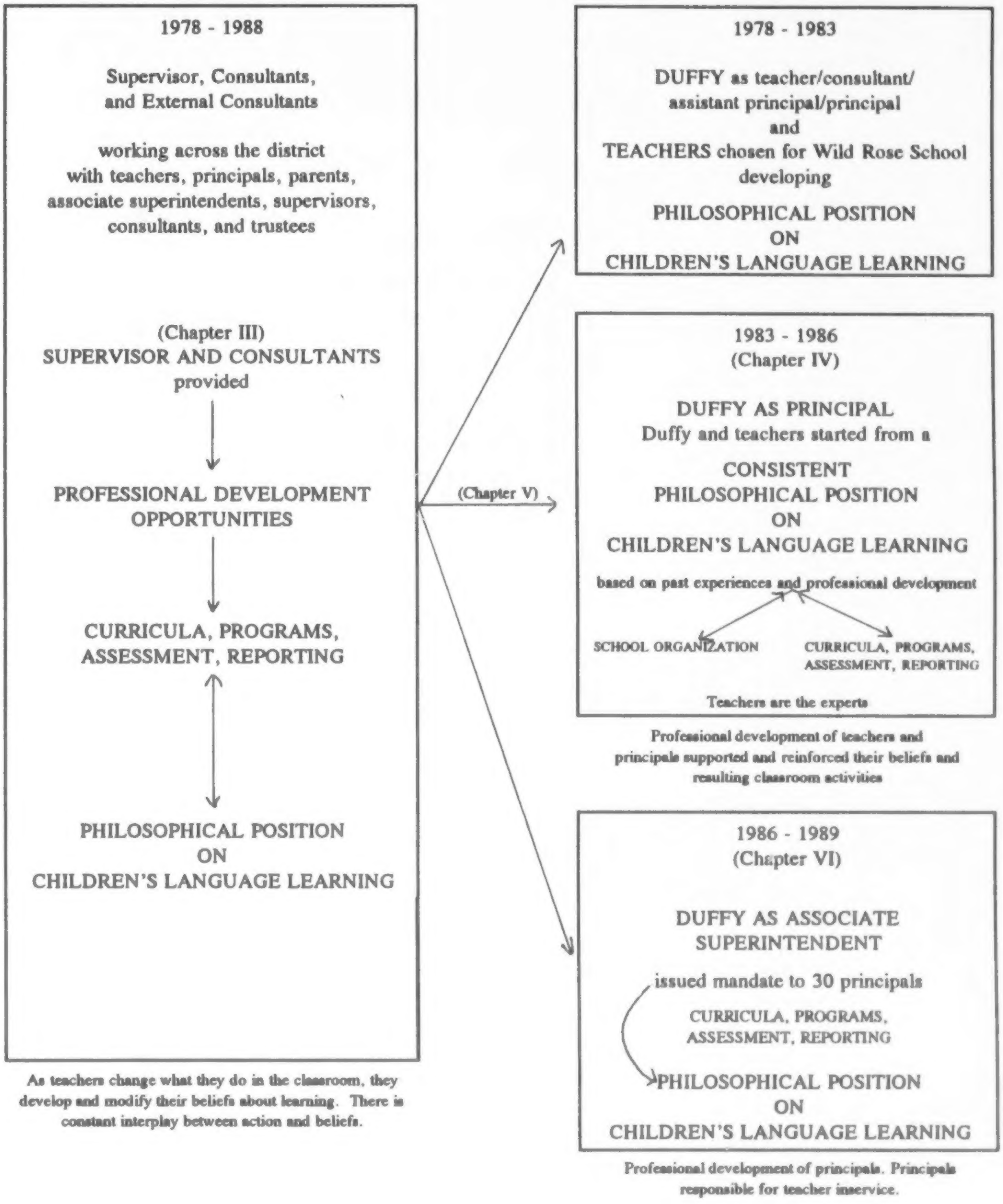
APPENDIX

LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION: EFFECTING CHANGE



1978 - 1988

Supervisor, Consultants,
and External Consultants

working across the district
with teachers, principals, parents,
associate superintendents, supervisors,
consultants, and trustees

(Chapter III)
SUPERVISOR AND CONSULTANTS
provided

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
OPPORTUNITIES

CURRICULA, PROGRAMS,
ASSESSMENT, REPORTING

PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION
ON
CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE LEARNING

As teachers change what they do in the classroom, they develop and modify their beliefs about learning. There is constant interplay between action and beliefs.

(Chapter V)

1978 - 1983

DUFFY as teacher/consultant/
assistant principal/principal
and
TEACHERS chosen for Wild Rose School
developing

PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION
ON
CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE LEARNING

1983 - 1986
(Chapter IV)

DUFFY AS PRINCIPAL
Duffy and teachers started from a

CONSISTENT
PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION
ON
CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE LEARNING

based on past experiences and professional development

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

CURRICULA, PROGRAMS,
ASSESSMENT, REPORTING

Teachers are the experts

Professional development of teachers and principals supported and reinforced their beliefs and resulting classroom activities

1986 - 1989
(Chapter VI)

DUFFY AS ASSOCIATE
SUPERINTENDENT

issued mandate to 30 principals

CURRICULA, PROGRAMS,
ASSESSMENT, REPORTING

PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION
ON
CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE LEARNING

Professional development of principals. Principals responsible for teacher inservice.

CURRICULUM VITAE

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EDUCATION

1995	Doctor of Philosophy, University of Alberta Thesis - **Leadership in Education: Effecting Change**
1969	Master of Education, University of Alberta Thesis - **The Reading Interests of Grade V Students**
1967	Bachelor of Education (English Major), University of Alberta
1940 - 1941	Edmonton Normal School (Teacher Training), Edmonton, Alberta
Pre-1940	Grades 1-12, Taber, Alberta

EMPLOYMENT

June 1988	Retired from Edmonton Public Schools
1978 - 1988	Supervisor, Language Arts (K-12) Edmonton Public Schools

EMPLOYMENT (continued)

1968 - 1978	Consultant, Language Arts Edmonton Public Schools
1967 - 1968	Leave of absence for study purposes
1966 - 1967	Teacher, Edmonton Public Schools
1965 - 1966	Sabbatical leave for study purposes
1960 - 1965	Teacher, Edmonton Public Schools
1958 - 1960	Substitute Teacher, Edmonton Public Schools
1946 - 1958	At home, caring for family
1945 - 1946	Teacher, Correspondence Branch, Alberta Education, Edmonton, Alberta
1941 - 1945	Teacher, elementary/junior high school Drumheller and district, Alberta

Other:

1978	Seconded for one month by Alberta Education to develop integrated science/language arts materials
1969 - 1971	Sessional lecturer, University of Alberta, Elementary Education

COMMITTEE WORK

1993 - 1996	Board of Directors, Alberta Provincial Council, International Reading Association
1993 - 1996	Board of Directors, Whole Language Umbrella (An international organization of language educators)

COMMITTEE WORK (continued)

1987 - 1988	Member of ad hoc committee, The Word Processor and the Writing Process, Alberta Education
1983 - 1986	Member of Commission on Reading, National Council of Teachers of English
1978 - 1986	Member of Language Arts Curriculum Co-ordinating Committee (Gr. 1-12), Alberta Education
1973 - 1978	Member of ad hoc Elementary Language Arts Committee, Alberta Education

MAJOR CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

1994	San Diego, California. Conference of Whole Language Umbrella. Presentation: **What Makes a Great Principal in a Language-Based School?**
1989	Winnipeg, Manitoba. Conference of CEL (Child-Centered Experience-Based Learning) Group. Presentations: **Evaluation of Language Learning** **Developing and Implementing a School Language Policy**
1988	Winnipeg, Manitoba. School District Conference. Presentation: **Assessment of Language Learning**
1988	Toronto, Ontario. Annual Conference of International Reading Association. Joint presentation with Dennis Searle: **How Assessment Can Serve Teaching and Learning**

MAJOR CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (continued)

1986	Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Great Park, England. Annual Conference of CELT (Center for the Expansion of Language and Thinking). Presentation: **Curriculum Implementation in Edmonton Public Schools**
1986	Ottawa, Ontario. Fourth International Conference on the Teaching of English (jointly sponsored by the International Federation for the Teaching of English and the Canadian Council of Teachers of English). Joint presentation with Dennis Searle: **An Alternative Assessment Program in Language Arts**
1986	Phoenix, Arizona. Spring Conference, National Council of Teachers of English. Pre-conference workshop: **Administrator/Teacher Collaboration**
1985	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Annual Conference of National Council of Teachers of English. Session: Basal Readers in the Canadian Experience - Implications for the United States. Presentation: **The School District's Responsibility: Interpreting the Curriculum and Recommending Resources**
1985	Edmonton, Alberta. Annual Conference of Canadian Council of Teachers of English. Panel member: **A National Perspective on Assessment of Language Arts Programs**
1984	Red Deer, Alberta. Annual Conference of Alberta English Language Arts Council. Presentation: **An Alternative Assessment Program in Language Arts**

MAJOR CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (continued)

1984 Detroit, Michigan. Annual Conference of National Council of Teachers of English. Presentation with Dennis Searle:

An Alternative Assessment Program in Language Arts

1984 Edmonton, Alberta. Annual Conference of Edmonton and District Local Council of the International Reading Association. Panel member:

Assessment of the Language Arts Program: A District Perspective

PUBLICATIONS

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Searle, D. & Stevenson, M.T. (1987, March). An alternative assessment program in language arts. *Language Arts*, *64* (3), 278-284.

AWARDS

1992	Merron Chorny Award, presented by the Canadian Council of Teachers of English, for outstanding contributions to the teaching profession and to English language arts
1988	Honorary Life Membership, Public School Administrators Association (Edmonton), for leadership provided in the school district
1988	Honorary Life Membership, Alberta Teachers' Association
1987	Honorary Life Membership, Alberta English Language Arts Council, in recognition of contributions to the professional development of language arts teachers in the province of Alberta
1986	Honorary Life Membership, Edmonton and District Local Council, International Reading Association, in recognition of contributions to teachers and administrators in English language arts
1984	President's Award, CEL (Child-Centered Experience-Based Learning) Group, Winnipeg, Manitoba, for outstanding assistance to teachers in developing quality language arts programs

HONORS

1992 **The Margaret T. Stevenson Talented Young Writer Award**
Edmonton Public Schools

Colleagues, friends, and relatives established this annual award to recognize the writing talent of students in the eighth year of schooling.

This award was established in Margaret Stevenson's name "in recognition of her encouragement of young writers and her promotion of quality children's literature during the years she served as supervisor language arts for Edmonton Public Schools."

MEMBERSHIPS

National Council of Teachers of English

Canadian Council of Teachers of English

Alberta English Language Arts Council

International Reading Association

Edmonton and District Local Council, International Reading Association

CELT (Center for the Expansion of Language and Thinking)

Whole Language Umbrella -- A Confederation of Teacher Support Groups and Individuals